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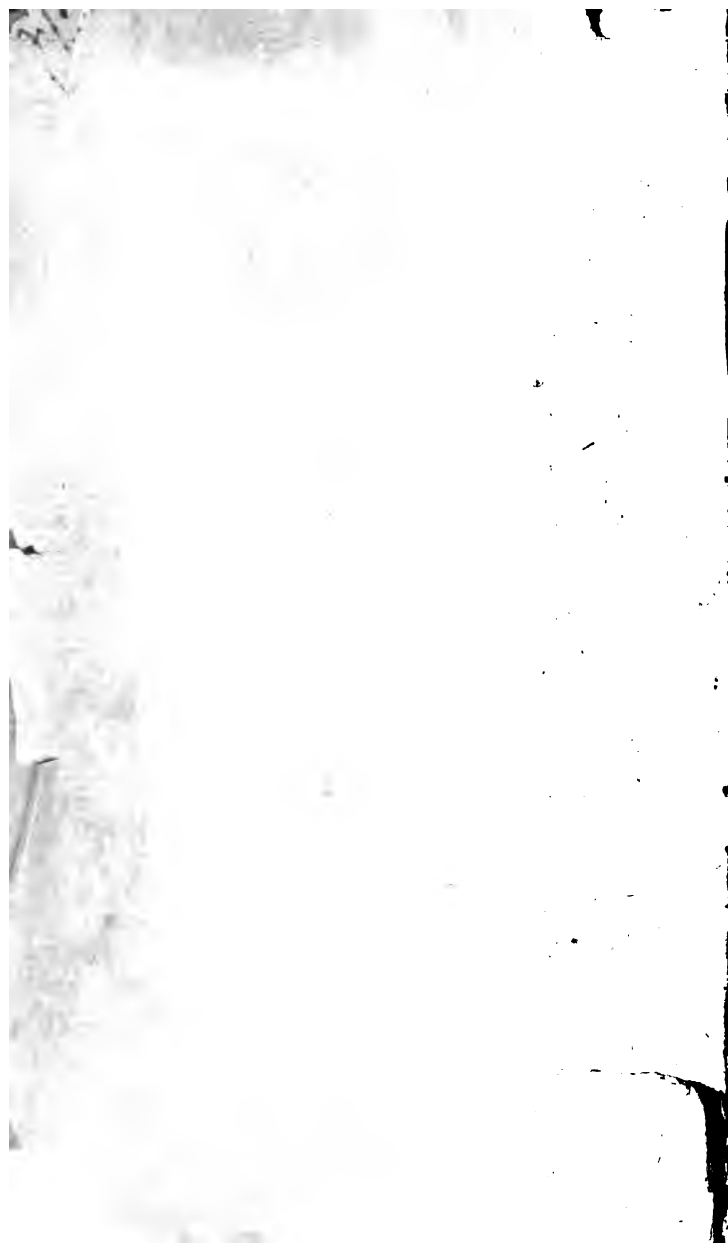
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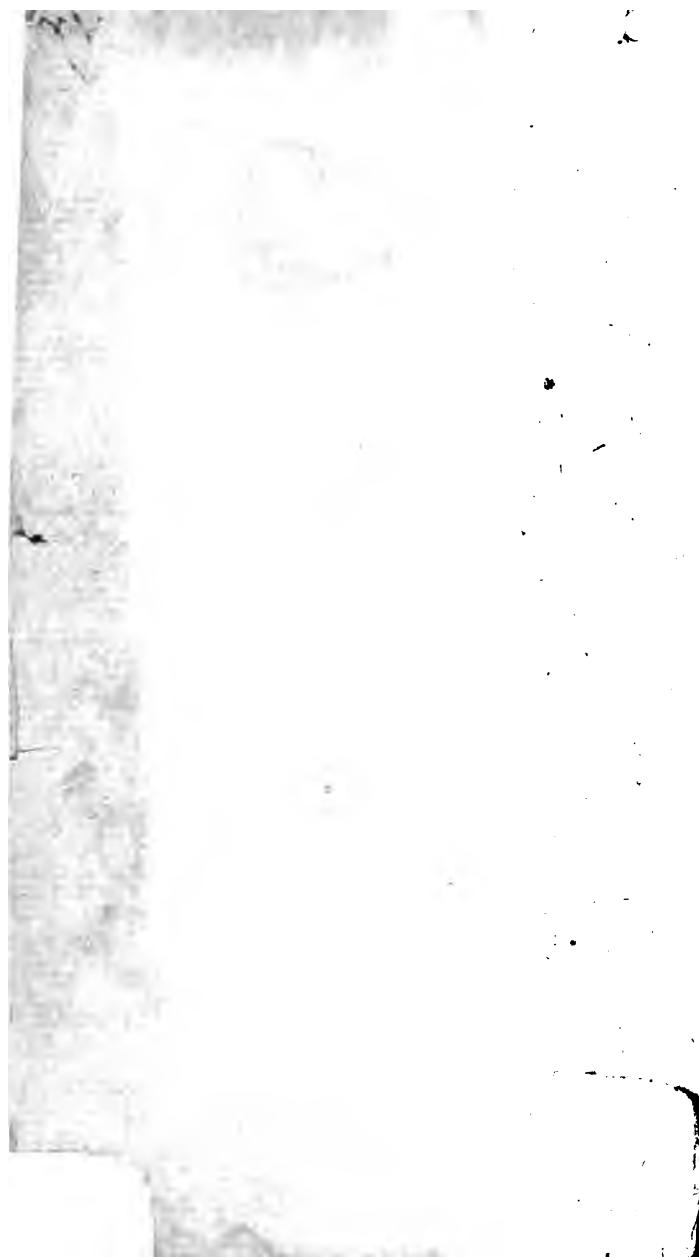


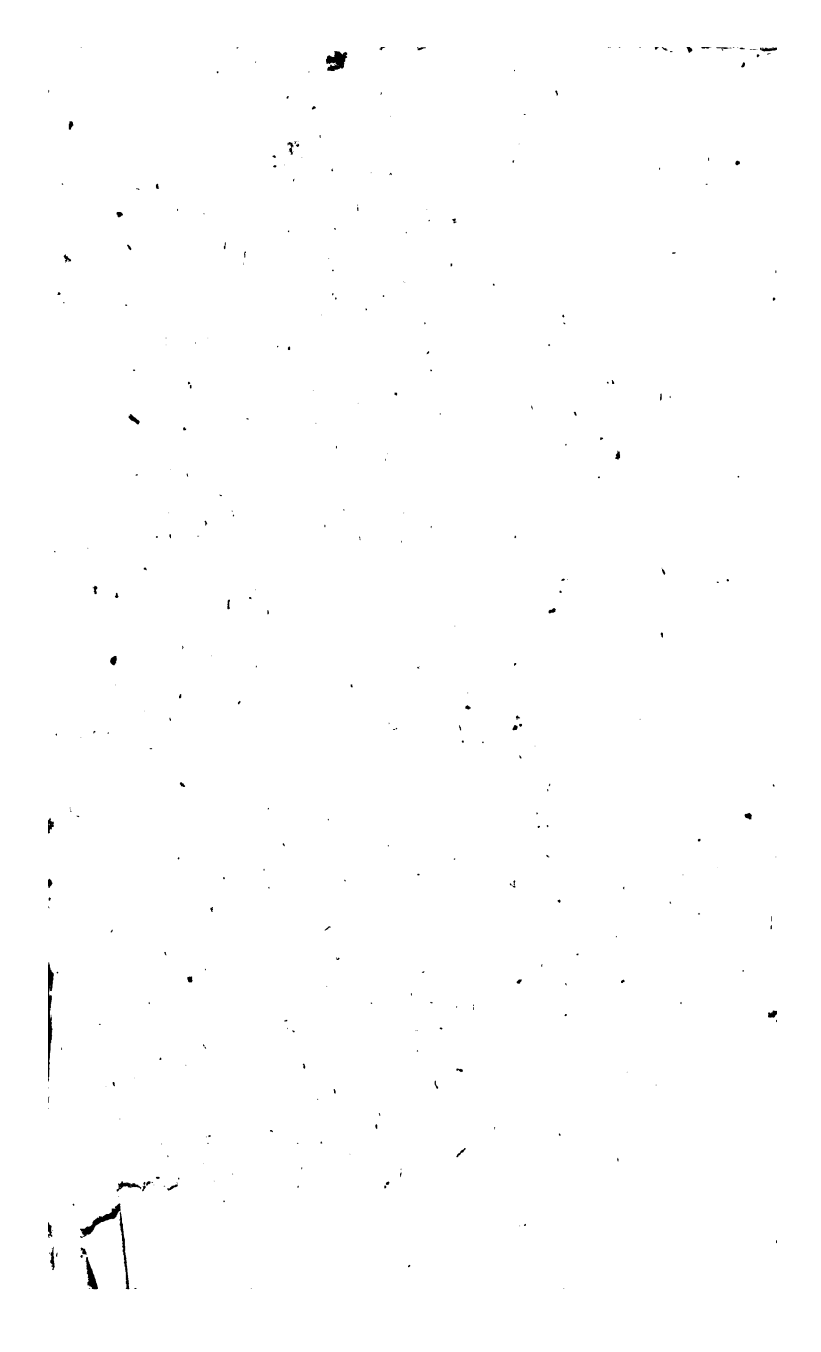
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WITH

DEVILS:

MINISTRATION of, and COMMUNION

WITH

ANGELS.

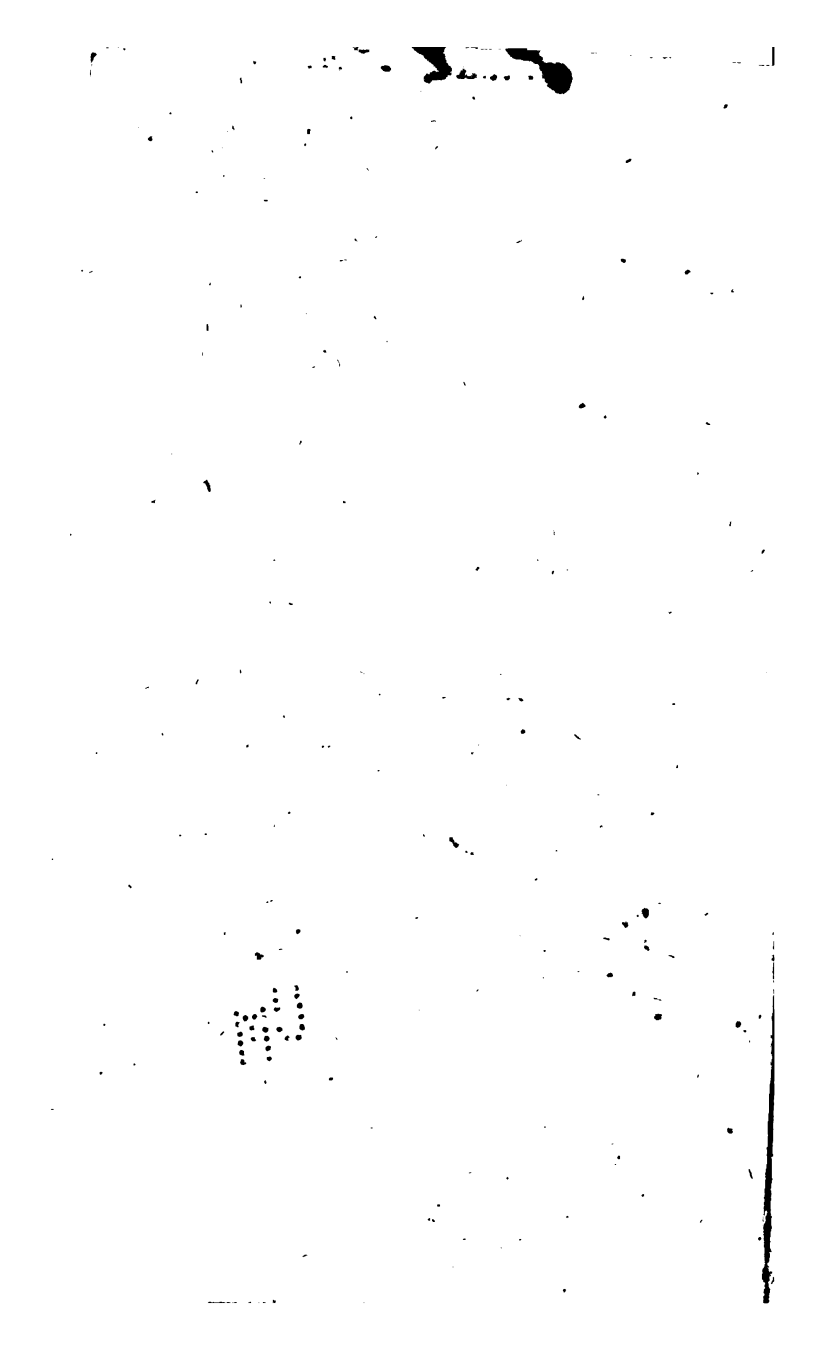
By Mr. ISAAC AMBROSE, Minister of the Gospel.

REV. xii. 7. *And there was war in heaven, Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon; and the Dragon fought and his Angels.*

PSAL. xci. 11, 12. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

GLASGOW:

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above the Cross. M,DCC,LXIX.



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE,
Sir ORLANLO BRIDGEMAN, Kt.
Lord Chief Justice of his Majesty's Court
of COMMON PLEAS.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

I Have known you from your childhood; and when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, (if I may so call her of pious memory) and I am persuaded in you also, 2 Tim.i. 5. *abincunabulis*. I cannot but comfortably hope, that the same seed of God sown in your heart by the Spirit so early, doth still remain, and abide in you to this very day: Many changes have you seen and run thro' in these few days of the years of your pilgrimage, and yet I hear the same faith, and love, and spirit of moderation continue with you as at the first, and increase in you daily, like the rivers drawing nearer to the ocean. My heart rejoiceth in this good report, and I know not what more to beg of God for you as truly necessary in this world, than that you may abound in these graces of faith in Christ, love to the saints, and moderation towards all men. In acting the first grace, you look heaven-wards; in the second, on those that are heavenly; in the third, on the divided interests of them who shall study and practise mutual forbearance, and condescension towards each other. Oh that in this last day we had many more imitators of his Majesty that now is, or of you that walk in the steps of so gracious a Sovereign! It is ob-

served that in the primitive times, while the church was still known by its faith, and love, and moderation, and sweetness of deportment towards all its members, that on the contrary, the Arians and Donatists, and such like, were still dividing and separating, and rigorously imposing on others unnecessary things. If I may speak without offence to any, were it not happy with us, if all that agree in substantials and essentials of religion, would make it their main work to press faith and holiness, and allow a liberty to each other in indifferent things? Were all as sensible of the advantage we give the common enemy (I mean the Papists) as I am, that live and reside amongst them, I suppose we should be more willing to unite ourselves, and to bear the burdens of one another in love. It was a working meditation of St. Jerome, That whatever he did, he thought still he heard that sound of the trumpet, Arise ye dead and come to judgment, Phil. iv. 5. The same meditation is held forth to us to persuade us to unity, or at least to moderation, Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand, Rom. xiv. 17, It were sad when he comes, he should find us smiting our fellow-servants, Matth. xxiv. 49. Oh that rather we may cherish one another, and help one another to promote these essential duties wherein the kingdom of God especially consists, viz. righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17. These are the things wherein you were trained, and wherein you profited, and which I hope and desire you will promote to your dying day. O that that golden rule were written on the doors of all Christian's hearts, Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart, 2 Tim. ii. 22. We have enemies enough to wrestle with, even against

gainst principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in heavenlies: and we have many friends that wait upon us, and minister to us, and persuade us in their spiritual and mysterious way to those essential duties of peace and patience, gentleness and meekness; of both these you will read in the following treatise; and they will lead you on to another duty of looking unto Jesus, wherein if we spend all the time we can spare for such a contemplation, we shall find work enough besides unneccessaries, to busy our minds and consciences upon; and surely blessed is that servant, (let the world say what it will) whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing, Matth. xxiv. 46. I know you are full-handed with several high and necessary employments; I resolve therefore to make no long epistle: If you please to patronize the following work of WAR with DEVILS, and COMMUNION WITH ANGELS; both which I hope you will find consonant to holy scriptures, I shall be yet more engaged to acknowledge myself, and to remain,

Your Honour's

Humble, faithful Servant in Christ,

ut olim, ut semper,

ISAAC AMBROSE.

TO

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

AMONGST the means, duties, ordinances, which I did discover in their right method, manner, and proceedings, I observed three ordinances made little use of, tho' most necessary. The first is war with devils, held forth in Eph. vi. 12. The second is ministration of, and communion with angels, held forth in Heb. i. 4. The third is looking unto Jesus, held forth in Heb. xii. 2. These three have some suitableness among themselves, and accordingly I have observed some suitableness in this work: In themselves it is suitable that war with devils should have encouragement from holy angels, and yet that we should not stay here, or dwell on them, but look a little further, and rest on nothing on this side Jesus Christ. In the work, I have first enlarged by way of preface on each duty; I see they are ordinances little practised or made use of, and therefore I thought a confirmation of each duty, and a persuasion to it, as well as direction in it, was not altogether labour in vain: In the direction itself, I have followed each one from first to last: War with devils begins with the beginning of our life, and continues to death: Ministration of, and communion with angels begins at the beginning, and continues till the end of this world, or resurrection-day: Looking unto Jesus begins with eternity, and continues to eternity; it minds what was before the world was, and minds what shall be when time shall be no more. Now in that I have observed such a correspondency in all these ordinances, I thought it not amiss to join all those together; and tho' for the largeness they contain two volumes, yet to comprise them in one work.

Thou hast now my last works of practical divinity, that ever I mean to publish to the world; and if last words are wont to bear the greatest weight, and to make the deepest impression, much more let these last practical lines find some entertainment from thee for thy spiritual good. This (next to God's glory) is my chiefest end, and so I leave thee, and the book together in God's hands; may his Spirit inspire good motions, when thou readeest my directions, and bring them to good issue. It is the prayer of,

Thy unworthy Friend, and

Servant in Christ's vineyard,

ISAAC AMBROSE.

WAR WITH DEVILS.

THE FIRST BOOK.

EPH. vi. 12. *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this World, against Spiritual Wickednesses in Heavenlies.*

CHAP. I. SECT. I.

The Coherence and Division of the Words.

AMONGST other exhortations, our apostle gives in this, *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. And to this end he propounds, 1. The means, *Put on the whole armour of God*, ver. 11. And, 2. The motives, drawn from a Christian's fight and combat; wherein is, 1. The kind of combat; called wrestling, we wrestle. 2. The combatants themselves, to wit, Christians and devils; we are the defendants, and they are the assailants: They, who are they? 1. Negatively, or comparatively, not flesh and blood. 2. Affirmatively, or positively, principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness in this world, and spiritual wickedness in (or about) heavenlies.

SECT. II.

Of the several Doctrines deduced from the words.

FROM every part we may deduce a several doctrine: As, 1. Our spiritual combat is a wrestling. 2. All God's people are to be in the fight. Our enemies are more than flesh and blood. 4. They are mighty and malicious enemies that war against us, even principalities, powers, rulers, and spiritual wickednesses. My design is to insist on the first, only we shall begin with the three latter, and briefly say something of every one of them.

CHAP. II. SECT. I.

Of the first doctrine to be handled.

ALL God's people are to be in the fight, We wrestle. This *we* is either exclusive or inclusive: 1. Exclusive,

five, not the wicked. 2. Inclusive, but we that are saints, and the people of God.

1. Not the wicked; they serve not in this war; instead of fighting the Lord's battles, they spend their time in chambering and wantonness, in lusts and uncleanness, in carelessness and idleness; they sleep in security, they make no resistance for they are altogether ignorant of Satan's assaults. Oh that men's eyes were opened! Oh that such men would know they are none of the *we* in this text! they are not the Lord's soldiers, but the devil's revellers; and therefore they fight not against him, nor will he fight against them: for *they have made a covenant with death, and with hell are they at agreement*, Isa. xxviii. 15.

2. All the saints must be in this fight, We wrestle. I Paul, and you Ephesians, and all God's people from first to last. First for Paul himself, *I have fought a good fight*, 2 Tim. iv. 7. and then for Paul and others jointly; 'tho' we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh, 'for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thro' God to the pulling down of strong holds,' 2 Cor. x. 3, 4. Or if we may bring in the examples of God's saints in all ages, Adam had his combat, Job his temptations; Moses, and Aaron, and Lot, and David, and all the patriarchs, and all the prophets, had their several onsets: Nor was it thus only before Christ's time, but since his coming; Peter was winnowed, Paul was buffeted; the Hebrews endured a great fight of affliction, Heb. x. 32. and Timothy was encouraged by Paul, 'Thou, O man of God, fly these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fighting the good fight of faith,' 1 Tim. vi. 11, 12. But to what purpose should I instance? Never was there any member of Christ's church, who was not exercised with this Christian warfare: Not Adam in innocency; not the apostles of Christ; no, nor Christ himself, when he was upon earth, 'Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil,' Mat. iv. 1.

S E C T. II. *Uses.*

Use 1. **A**RE all God's people to war with devils? then consider all of you what religion will cost you:
You

You that are strangers, know, that a Christian soldier must endure hardness; *Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*, 2 Tim. ii. 3. Saints must be winnowed, and buffeted, and tried, and tempted; sharp war, sudden violences, dreadful dangers, are the portion of God's people; *They must thro' much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God*, Acts xiv. 22. they must proceed from one action into another: Was it not Paul's case? How was he in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by countrymen, in perils by heathens, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils amongst false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, 2 Cor. xi. 23, 26, 27. Certainly Christianity is not so easy as many take it to be. I speak not these things to dismay any, but to awaken all, and to advise all to cast up their accounts, and to be resolved men.

Use 2. Are we to fight with devils? then courage, Christians! you that are of the right stamp, of the number of this *we*. O be not dejected because of the enemy, but be you of good heart! What, are you afraid of Satan's fiery darts? know they are but as the waves tossing the air, yet saving Noah; or as the whale swallowing up, yet preserving Jonah; or as the dragon pursuing the woman, yet procuring her great preservation; or as the file grating the iron, yet making it clearer and brighter than before; or as the mill grinding the wheat, yet making it useful; or as the coals heating perfume, yet making it thereby more odoriferous. You say this war is troublesome; this indeed is Jacob's voice, for never an Esau complained thus: But do you feel your spirits sharpened, your pride depressed, your flesh cooled, your old man destroyed, your new man renewed day by day? Tell me, are not you provoked to more earnest and ardent prayers by this war? Do not you accustom yourselves to more patience, as now experiencing the fragility and frowardness of your natures? Are not Satan's temptations as thorns in your ways to keep you from straying and running wrong? O then be you not afraid!

afraid! come, enter into the lists and fight valiantly; it an honest war; Christ invites you to it, and he will lea you, and never never leave you in it; what needs more be strong, and of a good courage.

C H A P. III.

Of the Second Doctrine and Uses.

OUR enemies are more than flesh and blood, *We wrestle*, but with whom? Negatively, Not with flesh and blood; or rather comparatively, not only, or not so much with flesh and blood. By flesh and blood is either meant man, as having a bodily substance consisting of flesh and blood; or our bosom corruptions, so often called in scripture flesh. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and sometimes flesh and blood, *as flesh and blood hath not revealed this*, and *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 17. Mat. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

1. If by flesh and blood be meant the former, it hints to us our weak and infirm natures; *q. d.* Our adversaries are not such as we are, they are not poor, weak, inconsiderable enemies. When the Lord speaks of our frail condition, he gives it the like expression: *My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh*, Gen. vi. 3. and the prophet Isaiah hath the same expression concerning the Egyptians, *Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit*, Isa. xxxi. 3. In this sense the apostle removes the usual militia, or more tolerable conflicts: *q. d.* We wrestle not so much with man, as with devils; we wrestle not only, or chiefly with flesh and blood, weak, frail, foolish, visible or mortal creatures; alas! What are they? the enemies that we fight with are more than flesh and blood, more envious, malicious, furious, dangerous, numerous, more subtle, powerful, every way fearful: And therefore in comparison, we wrestle not with flesh and blood; we matter not man, we mean no such combatants.

Use. Here then I must leave our martial men, whose war is with flesh and blood, and 'tis well if it be not only with flesh and blood, and nothing else. The apostle's question needs but application, 'From whence come wars and fightings, among you, come they not hence, even of your

‘ your lusts that war in your members?’ James iv. 1. *q. d.* You have wars and fightings among yourselves, if they were only with foreign enemies, they were more tolerable; civil wars are ever worst, and whence are these? are they not of a base original and descent, of the lineage of lust? O the covetousness, pride and ambition that is amongst you! O the loathing, rejection and disobedience of the gospel of Christ! O the dear and high esteem, advancement and vile embracement of the interest of this present world! Do not worldly, private interests bear the sway? and what are these but lusts? and what are the effects of lusts, but wars and fightings amongst yourselves? In way of application; Oh that I could but truly say, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against devils! or, Oh that I could not truly say, We wrestle not against devils, but only against flesh and blood, But my design is not to intermeddle with outward wars, it is a more inward and spiritual work I have in hand.

1. If by flesh and blood be meant the latter, *viz.* our bosom corruptions, it hints to us our strong enemies, strong indeed, *q. d.* We have enemies within us; do we not feel how the flesh lusteth against the Spirit? And are not these enemies as the sons of Zeruiah, too hard for us? But that is not all, for Satan who is yet stronger, strikes in with the flesh, and by this means we wrestle not only with flesh and blood, naked corruptions, but with Satan in them; our flesh is strong, but when it is edged with Satan’s policy, and backt by Satan’s power, Oh how strong is it then?

This enemy within us, the Holy Ghost deciphereth by many names; it is called the old man; the old Adam; the earthly, carnal, natural man; the sin which is inherent, and dwelleth in us; the adjoining evil; the law of the members; the lusts of the flesh which fight against the soul. By all which is signified our corruption of nature, derived from our first parents, whereby we are made backward to all good, and prone to all evil. ‘ Every man is ‘ tempted when he is drawn away by his own concupiscence, and is enticed; and when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, it bringeth

'eth forth death,' James i. 14, 15. The apostle here intimates, that as Satan is the father, so flesh is the mother of sin, which receiving Satan's temptations into a fruitful womb, it doth conceive, nourish, and bring forth sin; and when sin is born, like a deadly stinging serpent, it brings forth death both to body and soul, unless the poison thereof be took away by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Use. And what, my brethren, are our enemies more than flesh and blood? Oh the sad condition of men that provide not for this war? Christians, how doth it concern you to stand upon your guard, and to be in use of all means against flesh and blood? If a city were besieged with foreign forces, and they within knew that they harboured home-bred traitors, would they not lay hands on them, and put them to death? My brethren, your souls are as cities besieged with all the power and policies of devils, and you have within you home-bred enemies, even your own flesh and blood, these seek all occasions to betray your souls into devils hands; Is it not time then to mortifie the flesh, and lusts thereof? Is it not time then to implore the aid and assistance of God's Spirit whereby you may be strengthened and enabled to slay those lusts, which war against the soul: These are in some respects more dangerous and pernicious than devils themselves; they are within your bosoms, and like secret traitors, they open the city-gates, yea, they disarm you of your weapons, and lay you naked to Satan's invasions and temptations. Probable it is, that Satan could never vanquish you, unless the flesh, and the lusts thereof did betray you into his hands: Probably his policy could never circumvent you, unless the secret traitors did give him continual intelligence of all advantages. Sure I am, the devil is but an outward cause of sin, he cannot compel or force you to sin, but your lusts help on; Oh then, how should you watch over your bosom corruptions, and be in use of all means for the mortifying of this flesh and blood.

C H A P. IV.

Of the third Doctrine.

THEY are mighty and malicious enemies that war against us, even *principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness*

darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in heavenlies. Thus are they positively described. I shall a little search into the words, that we may understand what puissant enemies we have against us.

1. Principalities, they are not only princes, but principalities in the abstract; it sets forth the eminency of their government, above all the princes in the world: Other princes rule in some parts, but Satan rules over all the earth; hence sometimes he is called Prince of the world, John xiv. 30. and sometimes the god of this world, 2 Cor. iv. 4. He could tell Jesus Christ, that *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them were delivered unto him, and to whomsoever he would, he gave them*, Luke iv. 6, 7. I do not say that the devil spake truth to Christ; for the world was not his either in possession or disposition; for possession, *the earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is; the world, and all that dwell therein*, Psal. xxiv. 1. and for disposition, it is God's prerogative and peculiar, *By me kings reign*, Prov. xviii. 15. *All powers that are, are ordained of God*, Rom. xiii. 1. *He maketh low, and he maketh high, it is the Most High that beareth rule over the kingdoms of men*, Dan. iv. 12. Yet this we grant, that Satan is truly called the prince of the world as it is corrupted; when the world departed from God to his adversary, God in justice gave Satan leave to prevail and rule in the sons of disobedience; and thus devils are princes, or in the abstract principalities over all the earth.

2. Powers. They are not only powerful, but powers in the abstract; *i. e.* they are clothed and filled with a mighty power: Were devils princes only in their stile, and had no power, the title could not carry it; we little esteem of sounds, syllables and words. Have we not seen what the sword can do without a title, and how empty the title is without the sword? Well, but devils have both; as they are principalities, so they are powers; they are the princes of the power. What this power is, is past my telling, only if we look in the world, we may find it wonderful in several parts of it. As,

1. For the elementary part of the world: What element is it, that he hath not power over. 1. Fire is the element prepared

prepared for him; and he can (let it loose) send it down contrary to its nature from heaven to earth. Thus one of the messengers told Job, 'The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee,' Job i. 16. It is called the fire of God, though caused by Satan; it was not God, but Satan that was the immediate kindler of it; and yet called the fire of God, because of the strangeness of the fire; it was a wonderful, great and extraordinary fire; some think it was a flash of lightening, and it is more probable, because it is said to fall down from heaven. 'Satan can do mighty things, command much in that magazine of heaven, where the dreadful artillery, the fiery meteors, which make men tremble, are lodged and stored up (saith Caryl.) For instance, he can discharge the great ordnance of heaven, thunder and lightning; and by his art, he can make them more terrible and dreadful than they are in nature. 2. The air is his own element, wherein now he reigneth; he is 'Prince of the power of the air,' Eph. ii. 2. *i. e.* of the airy dominion or principedom. The Jews have a tradition, that all the space between the earth and the firmament is full of troops of evil spirits, their chieftians having their residence in the air. Augustine and Jerome tell us, that this was the opinion of all the primitive doctors: Now if there they are as princes, and have power, no wonder they can violently move the air, and cause tempests and storms. Thus another messenger told Job, 'There came a great wind from the wilderness and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead,' Job i. 19. Satan being left to his own dispose, can raise and enrage storms and tempests. I believe (saith Caryl) 'Satan cannot raise so much wind by his own power, and at his own pleasure, as will weave a feather; but when God saith, Go and do such things, then he can raise wind enough to move mountains, and raise the foundations of the proudest and strongest buildings.' Thus Job's children were buried in the ruins of their house, 'by a puff (as one calls it) of the devil's mouth.' 3. The water is an element commanded by him; he can trouble the seas, and cause such waves
and

and billows to arise, as shall swallow up ships and men; he can make such surges as shall swell over banks. It is Mr. Gurnal's expression, 'He can hurl the sea into such commotion, that the depths shall boil like a pot, as if heaven and earth would meet.' I cannot but think the devil was in that storm, when the waves beat into the ship where Christ slept, for being awoke, 'He rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, peace, be still.' (*Phimotheti*) a word that sometimes he uses to the devil, Luke iv. 35. *q. d.* be muffled Satan, thou stirrest these waves, (Mark iv. 39.) had my disciples believed, as they should have done, thou hadst not done this. By faith Satan avoids, and by diffidence Satan re-enters, and is full of rage. 4. The earth is his element over which he rangeth; when the Lord asked him, 'Whence comest thou Satan?' he answered from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it, Job i. 7. Satan here speaks like a prince that had gone about his countries to view his provinces, his kingdoms and cities, I come (saith he) from visiting my several places and dominions. And though his intent be to devour men, yet in reference to this very element, he can cause earth quakes, throw down the strongest buildings, root up the best settled trees, and move all things.

2. For the sensible part of the world, he can enter into the bodies of beasts, and act them at his pleasure. We have one notable instance of a 'legion of devils, entering into an herd of swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about 2000) and were choaked in the sea,' Matth. v. 13. An easy thing it is with Satan to hurry up and down the bodies of beasts, and to make them with violence rush hither and thither. And they have no less power on the bodies of men; have they not possessed them, and made them lunatic, and so vexed them 'that they have oftentimes fallen into the fire, and oftentimes in to the water?' Mat. xvii. 15. Nay, have they not made some deaf and dumb, dashing and tearing them, till they foamed and gnashed with their teeth, and even pined away? Or (if I may say more) have they not sometimes carried and hurried up and down even in the air, the bodies of men? I could instance in that sacred body of

Christ, 'whom the devil took up into the holy city, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple; and after took him up again into an exceeding high mountain, and there shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,' Matth. iv. 5, 8. That Satan can transport the bodies of witches, many histories record; and that he can bewitch the bodies of unbelievers, none will deny: but the scripture speaks of a power that the devil hath over Christ's body, and elsewhere of a like power that he had over the bodies of the saints. Job is one instance, and the daughter of that woman of Canaan, that was a daughter of Abraham, may serve for another instance: and if the Lord should not restrain the malice and power of the adversary, we might have as many instances as there are men and women in the world.

3. For the souls of men, which we call the intellectual part of the world, He hath a great power over them. 1. He can work on the understanding; he can penetrate into the fancy, which is the organ of internal senses, and move those phantasms he finds there, and by that means excite various thoughts in the understanding, and persuade to this or that. Do we not experience his power within us? do we not perceive evil thoughts injected into our minds against our wills; not that Satan imports any new thing into our minds, which he found not in our fancies before. It is usually delivered in the schools, That the devil cannot put into the fancy new species of things, and such as the senses had never any knowledge of; as he cannot make a man born blind, to dream of colours, and their differences. But he can make many compositions and deductions of those various phantasms he finds within, and accordingly move the understanding to this or that. 2. He can move the will; I cannot say that absolutely he can determine it. The bowing, bending, and turning and forming of the will efficaciously is only proper to God; yet can the devil act something as towards the will, and his acting carries a kind of power with it, tho' God only can determine it. The will may be said to be moved or bowed two ways, either inwardly or outwardly. The internal mover or agent, is either our own natural inclination and propension to its object,

object, or God himself who is the author of that inclination: Now in this way, there is nothing can move the will but God and ourselves. The external mover or principle, is either the object propounded to the will, the understanding having apprehended it as good; or the affections and concupiscence which reside in the sensitive appetite, for by them is the will often seduced, and drawn to consent. Very passions can make that many things which are evil, may seem good to the will, and so incline it to embrace them. Now this is certain, that devils can propound an object; and they can move, and trouble, and affect our passions; they can stir up wrath, pride, covetousness, lusts, in men; and therefore externally they cannot move the will.

3. *The rulers of the darkness of this world.* These words hold forth the proper seat of the devil's empire; he is not lord over all, that is the incommunicable title of God, but "a ruler of the darkness of this world." Where the time and place, and subjects of his empire are set down and limited.

1. The time when he rules, it is during the time of this world. Immediately after Adam's fall he began his rule, and while the world stands he will continue it without any change or alteration. Here is a difference betwixt the devil and any human power; for these have but a short time. The same man that rules now, will be dethroned within a few days, or months, or years, by death if not by treason: Or suppose his line, or model of government continue longer, yet some observe that scarce any rule continues in one form above 600 years continuance. See Abraham's time from the promise of his seed, to the giving of the law 430 years; see Israel's time from their going out of Egypt to the building of the temple 480 years; see David's time from the anointing of him king to the death of Zedekiah 470 years: what say we to our kingdoms? Cæsar's time betwixt his invasion and the rule of Valentinian 500 years; the Saxons time betwixt their heptarchy and Egbert's monarchy 460 years; the Norman's time and the union of whole Britain 536 years. On what unfirmness is majesty possess'd, that within a few year's time, so much is altered? But the devil hath a longer time, even so long as the world lasts, from the beginning to the end, until time shall be

no more. Indeed when the frame of this world shall be taken down, then shall the devil be degraded, his crown taken off, his sword broken over his head, and he himself become a close prisoner in hell. In the mean time he rules, and he will rule during the time of this present world.

2. The place where he rules, it is here in this world below. He was a bright angel in heaven, and he sometimes ruled there; but he would not keep in his own chair of estate, and therefore aspiring higher, he fell down to this nether world, and here now he rules. In the air, and here about the earth, devils have their mansions, and here they tempt, seduce, and do all the mischief they can do to the sons of men. I know it is our sadness and trouble, that they are amongst us: *Wo, wo, wo to the inhabitants of the earth* in this respect, Rev. viii. 13. and yet here is the joy of the saints, they have no power or rule in heaven, whence they are fallen, and where the saints happiness must for ever be: Well may this make us long for heaven, whilst we are on earth. Soldiers in tedious and dangerous voyages cannot but desire earnestly after victory. Oh (may we think) how welcome will triumph, and leading captivity captive be after war! As the hopes of a safe haven is to the mariners tossed up and down in troublesome seas; so is heaven to Christians, whose life in this world is a warfare. O friends, look after heaven, for on earth is many a snare, and many a gin, and many a plot of Satan to undo your souls, and to subject you to his rule.

3. The subjects or persons whom he rules; they are the *darkness of this world*, i. e. such as have no life of grace, no light of knowledge; for by darkness is meant such who are in darkness, and they are of two sorts: *First*, Those who are in a state of sin, called the *work of darkness*. *2dly*, Those who are in a state of ignorance compared to darkness; 'Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,' Eph. v. 11. and v. 8. But I am discovering the prince or ruler, and not his vassals; and therefore I shall pretermitt this title, and come to the next.

4. *Spiritual wickednesses*. They are not styled wicked spirits, or spiritual wicked ones; but in the abstract, spiritual wickednesses. Oh, what enemies are these? 1.

They

They are spirits and not bodies. If we had only to deal with flesh and blood, whether men or beasts, it were not so very much, though very terrible. But we wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual substances, with invisible spirits. An arm of flesh against poor fleshly creatures were enough to startle us; Oh, what startling, frightening work have we had within these very few years? But how much more startling is an arm of spirits that can reach to spirits? That know how to fight with us at all times, in all conditions, in all postures; whether we are alone or in company, idle or employed, sleeping or waking? That can fight invisibly, when we cannot see them; for as their nature, so are their assaults: Such as by the eyes of flesh and blood cannot be seen. 2. They are wickednesses, as by nature they are spirits, so by their condition they are evil and malicious spirits; spiritual wickednesses, or spirits of wickedness, *i. e.* most monstrously wicked and malicious spirits. Some observe that the devil hath his name (*O paneros*) the wicked one, to denote his spiteful nature; he is not barely wicked, but maliciously wicked, he cannot endure that souls of men should fare any better than himself; and therefore he makes it his trade, his delight, his main work to damn souls. 3. Some yet go higher, saying, that these spiritual wickednesses are such, as provoke men to wickednesses of a spiritual nature; we wrestle, (saith apostle) against whom? it is in the original (*pros ta pneumatika tes penerias*) *i. e.* against the spirituals of wickedness; as if these wicked spirits should make it their great design, not only to beset us with gross and fleshly sins, but with sins spiritualized, or with spiritual wickednesses, such as unbelief, pride, hypocrisy, idolatry, blasphemy, &c. As black as devils are, they can, if they will, appear as angels of light, and accordingly suit their temptations of the finest make.

But what is meant by the last word, in heavenliness? I cannot say, heavenly places, but heavenly things: As if the apostle should say, the cause of this fight is not for earthly things, it is an otherwise quarrel than is usual with us in our battles. Devils will not fight for lands or livings, for riches or mines of gold, but for heavenly things:

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would, if they could, bereave us of our God, our Saviour, our Comforter, of all our hopes of salvation, and glory of heaven.

S E C T. II.

1. **A**RE devils thus mighty and malicious? then mind this, consider what enemies you must fight against. Methinks a serious consideration of their power should raise up your hearts to bless that God that preserves you from them. Oh the mighty advantage they take over you! Should the Lord but give the chain, what mischief would they make in the world? How would they shake the heavens, shake the earth, undo all men and women in the world in an instant? My brethren, I would not have you dread them too much; and yet because they are so mighty malicious enemies, I would not have you fight them too much. I tell you there is nothing in this inferior world able to stand before them, no creature, no man. good angels indeed can match and master devils; but should God stop his angels, and withdraw his hand, they would quickly over-run, unquiet, unsettle all the world. Oh then restrain such apprehensions of their greatness, as that you may for ever bless that God who binds up such enemies, they do not the mischief unto which their nature inclines them, and enables them.

Are devils mighty and malicious? then let all temptations fly to God, and rely on his power; be they never so mighty, yet the Lord only is Almighty; he hath all drawn up a chain, and he straitens or enlargeth it as he pleases. His power is not only in heaven, but on earth, and in hell; and here is the hope of saints, here is their tower of strength; He that dwelleth in the secret places of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. O that God's people would in all danger haste to their God; that they would say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust. But of this nature we shall bring into the next point, that I hasten.

C H A P. V. S E C T. I.

Of the main Doctrine intended.

Our spiritual combat is a wrestling, *Est in emin e pale,*
Here is a wrestling to us; or we wrestle; [*pale*]
dicatur.

dicatur, quia corpus [palletai id est, quatitur. The Greek word, according to the proper notation of it, signifieth such a strife as maketh the body of him that striveth to shake; and howsoever sometimes it is given to a strife of sport; yet here it is used for a serious and fierce fight and combat; so fierce as it may well make the soul shake again.

But why is this combat called a wrestling?

1. Because Satan's fight is very close. This is the nature of wrestling, not to fight at a distance, but very near; Satan is so near that he cloeth with us; yea, gets within us. He takes hold of the heart within, the soul within. Other wrestlers may catch at the head, or arms, or thighs, or they may fold their arms about the middle of the body, and strive with it; but Satan is a spirit, and enters into spirits; his wrestling is so close, that neither understanding, will, affections, nor any thing within can escape his fangs.

2. Because this fight is very violent; wrestling is not an easy, lazy, idle combat. They that wrestle do it with their might, and strength, and utmost vigour. So deals Satan with us, he goes about as a roaring lion, 2 Pet. v. 8. he is very active to do mischief, he puts to his strength to devour souls: And accordingly must we deal with Satan; *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord*, Eph. vi. 11. as we must take heaven by violence, so we must escape hell by violence; devils are not to be dallied withal; we must quit ourselves like men; resist unto blood.

3. Because this fight hath in it many wrenches, windings, wiles, and arts. The cunning wrestler carries it not merely with his strength, but with his feats; his eye is upon all advantages; with a wrench, a turn, a trip, a sleight, he gets the mastery. Satan in this respect is an eminent wrestler; he makes it his trade, and is well acquainted with all the mysteries of it. He hath thousands and ten thousands of stratagems and wiles. He hath his *bathe* and *noemata*, as the apostle calls them, 1 Cor. ii. 12. that is, his depths, his profound plots and contrivances, moulded by malice and subtilty in his own large understanding, furnished with the experience of our corruptions, and the success of his many temptations for some thousands of years,

years, managed with all the crafts and policies of the most dark and hidden corners of hell. He hath his *methodaias*, as they are called, Eph. vi. 11. exquisite methods, in the wily conveyance of his stratagems, in ordering his assaults, and spitting his fiery darts. And is it not our duty and prudence to be well skilled in his wiles, and to counter-work him in his crafts; are we not therefore advised to put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil? Eph. vi. 11. As there is no standing without armour, so there is no fear of falling if we are but armed and prepared for him; his wiles should make us wise unto salvation, that tho' he wrestle artificially with us, we may be able to stand.

4. Because in this combat each party hath usually his aids or seconds. It is thus both with Satan and us. 1. He hath his aids; these are led under the conduct of these two captain-generals the world and the flesh. This world is the devil's darling, and chief champion. On the right hand it encounters us with prosperity, it casts before us the golden apples of riches, and how prone we are to listen to these Syren-songs, our experience tells us. On the left hand it tempts us by adversity, turning its smiles into frowns, its allurements into threats, its offers of honours and riches to proud menacings of poverty and ignominy; and how terrible these are in the eyes of flesh and blood, the best hearts can tell. The flesh is the devil's darling, by which we understand the corruption of nature; it fighteth and lusteth against the spirit, it rebels against the law of our mind, and leadeth us captive to the law of sin. * The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit lusteth * against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the * other; so that we cannot do the same things that we * would,' Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. 19. Both these are Satan's aids. 2dly, We have our aids: As God first takes our part, and he hath appointed his own Son as general of the field, called the Captain of our salvation, Heb. ii. 10. Whensoever we wrestle, he stands by with a reserve, as it were, for our relief at a pinch, and if we will but call upon him at our need, he will never leave us, fail us, nor forsake us. 2. The angels take our part: Behold the cha-
riots

riots of fire upon the mountains round about Elifha. Wrestlers are usually compast with a ring, and such a ring have saints; 'The angels of the Lord encamp round about them that fear him, and they deliver them,' Psal. xxxiv. 7. Now what better aids or seconds can we have than the angels of God, and the God of angels? Surely there are more for us than can be against us: Oh the comfort of this!

S E C T. II.

Use of Terror.

IS our spiritual combat a wrestling? then woe to the wicked, that never wrestle at all: Let them know, that they are not the Lord's soldiers, but the devil's revellers, and therefore he fights not against them, because they are his friends, 'When the strong armed man (Satan) keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace,' Luke xi. 20. but when a stronger than he cometh to dispossess him, there will be many a rustle, and many a wrestle, and usually such a man will feel the conflict. Now woe to them that are at ease in Zion, Amos vi. 1. Can we be God's servants and not his soldiers? Is not Christ's church on earth a truly militant church? in a warfare as well as wayfare? Oh then what is their condition that are rid only by the devil! they will not grapple with Satan, they love to sleep in a whole skin, they crown themselves with pleasant garlands of restful security, they imagine they may go to heaven in a bed of down: Oh but what will be the end of these men? The devil hath already laid them on their backs, and there remains nothing more but to kick them out of their security into hell.

S E C T. III.

Use of Encouragement.

IS our spiritual combat a wrestling? then courage, Christians, from those words, *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. One rightly observes, That the Christian of all men needs courage; a cowardly spirit is beneath the lowest duty of a Christian: The fearful are in the forlorn of those that march for hell, the violent and valiant are they who take heaven by force; except thou canst prove thy pedigree by an heroic spirit, except thou wilt dare to be holy in spite of men and devils, never

never think that thou art begotten of God. O how uncomely a sight is it, a bold sinner and a fearful saint! one resolved to be wicked, and a Christian wavering in his holy course! to see hell keep the field, impudently braving it with displayed banners of open profaneness, and saints to hide their colours for shame, or to run from them for fear, who should rather wrap themselves in them, and die upon the place. GURNAL'S *Christian Armour*:

Take courage therefore, O ye saints and be strong! When Joshua was to march before Israel into Canaan, the Lord was fain to raise up his spirit with redoubled words, 'Be strong and of a good courage. Only be thou strong and very courageous; Have not I commanded thee? be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest,' Josh. i. 6, 7. I say the same to you, who are to march thro' this wilderness into the heavenly Canaan, Take courage, for the Lord your God is with you: What if devils come behind and trip up your heels? Nay, what if they fly in your faces, and grapple with you hand to hand? Any weak David may wrestle with Goliath, so long as the battle is the Lord's, and that he comes to the field in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. But motives I shall reserve for the next use.

S E C T. IV.

Use of Exhortation with Motives.

IS your spiritual combat a wrestling? come then, fall on the duty; here's a world of devils ready to encounter you may imagine, and really it is so, that they come swiftly, furiously, strongly, their arms spread wide, and their fangs are open, and if they can, they will fasten on the whole man; their aim is to throw body, soul, and all into hell. What will you do now? will you turn your backs and fly? Shall the devil conquer without a stroke? No, God forbid. I beseech you stretch forth your arms, bid devils defiance, and resist them to your utmost, wrestle with all your might. Why, this is the duty I am pressing on you: Be serious and wrestle, though all shake by it. The motives are several. As,

1. There

1. There is a necessity for it; either you must wrestle with him, or be taken captive by him; there is no middle course; and shall not necessity make you fight? It is said that necessity and despair will produce wonders, they would make cowards fight, and are you worse than cowards.

2. The victory is certain if you will but wrestle. When Christ had made a valiant resistance the devil gave way and left him, Mark iv. 11. And to this purpose you have a promise, *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you*, James iv. 7. Satan is a foiled adversary, Christ hath overcome him already, and so shall ye if ye will but valiantly enter in Christ's name into the lists.

3. The sweetness of victory will abundantly recompence the trouble of your wrestling: Usually we mistake the traverses of our minds: We reckon upon the sweetness of sin, and the trouble of wrestling: But the right comparison is between the fruit of sin, and the fruit of victory: You have often had experience what it is to be overcome, do you now make trial how sweet the victory will be in overcoming.

4. The cause is just, your combat is lawful: God, who is justice itself, hath proclaimed it by his heralds; 'Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the assault of the devil,' Eph. vi. 10, 11. 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you,' James iv. 7. 'Be sober and watch, for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in the faith,' 1 Pet. v. 8. There are two things which make a war lawful and just, 1. The call of a just authority. 2. A just cause: Now in this conflict is a concurrence of both. 1. You have a lawful authority calling you to fight, even God who is the authority supreme. 2. Your cause is just; for Satan assaulting any of the children of God is a mere usurper, he hath no right over you, you are not his but the Lord's, by creation, by redemption, by special dedication. You do but defend your own souls, and the territory and dominion of God and Jesus Christ in you,

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1, and over you, whose dominion you are bound to pre-
ve. Surely you have good cause to wrestle, if you had
be but this, because your cause is good.

5. You have already in baptism taken a military sacra-
ment, and therein promised that you will continue God's
thful soldiers unto your life's end. What! my bre-
ren, take press-money to serve in God's wars against the
vil, and all his aids, and now to run away from your
ours. A sworn enemy to sin and Satan should never
all others turn his back; why, you are sworn enemies,
therefore stand to it, be of a good courage, resist un-
blood.

5. The Lord measures out your temptations, weigheth
r strength, and will not suffer you to be tempted above
you are able; he giveth shoulders, and fitteth the
len. Is not this his promise? 1 Cor. x. 13. 'There
th no temptation taken you, but such as is moderate,
'common to man) but God is faithful, who will not
fer you to be tempted above that you are able, but
l with the temptation also make way to escape, that
may be able to bear it. Souls are apt to complain,
e devil is strong, and temptation is strong, and I shall
by the hand of Saul.' Why, know now that all
temptations are weighed and measured out by God
lf, he saith to Satan as to the waves of the sea, Thus
lt thou go, and no farther. Thus he said concern-
b; Behold Satan, all that he hath is in thy power,
pon himself put not forth thy hand. Satan had a
o have gone further, he would have been upon Job
; if God had not stopt and curbed him: Certainly
would break all our backs, if he were let alone, but
ill not suffer it, for God hath fet him bounds, and
give you a proportionable strength. As a wise phy-
oes not give the same physick to every person, but
s every one's ability, so the Lord orders Satan in
g, that he cannot put the least dram into any tem-
but as it is measured out by the hand of God.

he Lord hath promised his presence with you in six
and in seven: He goeth out with you into the
t only as a looker-on, but to weaken the enemies
and

and to supply you with new strength. He weakens your enemies, and upon this account partly it is said, 'That we are more than conquerors thro' Christ that loved us,' Rom. viii. 37. because that in and thro' Jesus Christ our enemy is overcome before he strikes, and his blow is broken as he strikes. 2. He supplies you with new strength, I will not deny but now and then you may have a foil, but if so, the Lord will raise you up again, 'For tho' we fall, yet shall we not be cast down, because the Lord putteth under his hand,' Psal. xxxvii. 24.

8. Your weapons are impenetrable: Your armour is the armour of proof, compleat armour, every way sufficient to defend and keep you harmless. This if you put it on, will make you able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and to withstand in the evil day; and to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. v. 11, 13, 16. If you say, What is this armour? the apostle tells you of a girdle of truth and a breast-plate of righteousness, and shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, and a shield of faith, and an helmet of salvation, and a sword of the Spirit, praying always with all prayer and supplication of the Spirit, Eph. vi. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. The meaning is, that your armour is the graces and ordinances of Jesus Christ. Truth, and righteousness, and patience, and faith, and hope, and the word, and prayer; (under which by a synecdoche all other graces and ordinances are comprehended) are your spiritual armour. I know that all the virtue of this armour depends wholly upon God alone: Our faith, and hope, and love, and the word, and prayer would be all broken to shivers at one stroke of temptation, if the Lord did not establish and confirm them; and this is that which Christ tells Peter, *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*, Luke xxii. 22. But this armour by God's power hath been successful, and in the power of his might it ever will be successful. What is said of the bow of Jonathan, and of the sword of Saul, is truly said of this armour in this respect, they never returned empty from the blood of the slain, and from the fat of the mighty, 2 Sam. i. 22. Surely never any harnessed with this armour of God, left the field finally. Oh what encourager this!

9. To put all out of question, the Lord hath made promises of life to those that wrestle, 'He will give them to eat of the tree of life in the midst of paradise: He will give them of the manna that is hid, and he will write their names in the book of life. Blessed is he that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,' James i. 12. 'We do not contend for counters, but for crowns; and those not temporal and corruptible, but eternal and incorruptible, even for a crown of life,' 1 Cor. ix. 25.

10. There will be a day of triumph to all that will but wrestle: If you ask when? I answer, 1. At the day of judgment, then shall Christ your captain stand upon the earth, and you shall stand with him, glorying and triumphing to see your enemies dead, or wounded before you. Indeed others that were faint and delicate, and would not wrestle, as they were led captives by Satan at his pleasure, so shall they be led in triumph by him into hell: But for you that fight the Lord's battles, the day is a coming when you shall march with him into glory, and then shall you triumph all the way, and those enemies that now assault you, shall ly dead, as it were, before you, and you shall see them again no more for ever. No sooner shall Christ and his saints enter into heaven, but oh the glorious astonishing triumphs that will be there! The poet sung sweetly,

There shall we conquer, have our conquest crown'd
By hands of seraphims, triumph'd with the sound
Of heaven's loud trumpet, warbled by the shrill
Celestial quire, recorded with a quill
Pluck'd from the pinion of an angel's wing,
Confirm'd with joy by heaven's eternal King.

O my brethren, where is now your courage? where is your spirit? where is your ambition? think not on mean things, but on crowns, and victories, and glories; 'hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown,' Rev. iii. 11.

S E C T. V.

Other sorts of Motives.

THAT I may yet prevail with you to make you wrestlers, consider further, 1. God

1. God is on the side of all that wrestle. What! art thou afraid of the issue? Art thou indeed in Satan's hands? know then that Satan is in God's hands: If thou art but the Lord's soldier, he will not suffer himself to be so much disgraced as to suffer thee to be overcome by his mortal enemies: He hath armed thee with his own armour, and sent thee out to fight his battles; and therefore he will not have thee vanquished, being fortified with his strength; for so should his weapons be esteemed weak, and he himself be overcome in thee. When the Lord sent his angel to encourage Zechariah concerning Jerusalem, the message was this, I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about her. Surely Jerusalem must needs be impregnable that was thus walled about: The same promise is made to all the saints, and therefore they must needs be all invincible; if your shelter were stones, these might be battered; were it walls of lead, these might be melted; were it defence of waters, these might be dried up; were it garrisons of mighty men, these might be scattered; were it engines of war, these might be defeated; were it trenches, these might be stopped; were it bulwarks, these might be overthrown. But you are guarded with such a defence which cannot be demolished, to wit, with a wall of fire round about you. Balls of wild fire are terror and consumption to any enemies. Who could quench the fire of Sodom? or who shall quench the world, when it shall be all on fire? surely none. Paradise was kept with a fiery flaming sword, and none could enter thereinto, Gen. iii. 24. Israel was guided and protected by a fiery pillar, and none could molest them in their march, Exod. xiii. 21. What shall we say then, when the Lord our God is a wall of fire round about you, to consume your enemies and to succour you? Cheer up Christians! your God whose you are, and whom you serve, to whom nothing is too hard, Gen. xviii. 14. 'to whom nothing is impossible,' Matth. xix. 16. 'to whom none is like among the gods, glorious 'in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders,' Exod. xv. 11. 'Who removeth mountains, shaketh the earth, 'commandeth the sun, sealeth the stars, and thundereth 'marvellously with his voice; even he is a wall of fire round

'about you.' Oh what encouragement is this!

2. Jesus Christ is your captain; God hath made him general of the field, and if you had none other to fight for you, yet he alone is mightier than all your enemies. He hath already vanquished Satan, yea, he hath so bruised the serpent's head, that now he cannot overcome finally the least of his followers. Satan was the strong man who possessed all in peace; but our saviour Christ, who is stronger than he, coming upon him, hath overcome him, and taken from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils, Luke xi. 21, 22. Hence he is truly called our King, our Redeemer, our Head, our Captain; and will not you, the subjects of this King, the ransomed of this Redeemer, the members of this Head, the soldiers of this Captain, fight under his standard? Why consider, if you wrestle, Jesus Christ stands by to bring you off with honour. Sure you need not doubt of help, who have Christ your Captain for your second. If Satan be a roaring lion, Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. If Satan be an accuser, Christ is an advocate. He lived and died for you, and rather than you miscarry, he will live and die with you. For mercy and tenderness to his soldiers, none like him; he knows what it is to be exposed to the rage of a cruel fiend, and therefore he will succour those that are tempted, Heb. iv. 15. Christ's heart is intendered by his own experience, ever since he grappled with Satan; he is full of bowels to all them that are infeasled by him; yea, Christ is so dear over them, that then especially he intercedes his Father, when he observes his people in temptations, *q. d.* O Father, I pray that this poor man or woman may not fall in time of temptation; thus he prayed for Peter, Luke xxii. 32. when he was on earth, I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thus he prays for you in heaven. No sooner he sees Satan run in upon you, but he runs into the presence of God the Father, and spreads his blood and his sanctification for your help. Oh the loves of the Lord Jesus Christ!

3. The Spirit of God will strengthen you against the powers of the evil spirit. This is that Spirit of wisdom and understanding, that Spirit of counsel and might, that Spirit

Spirit that helpeth our infirmities, Isa. xi. 2. Rom. viii. 26. that kindleth and healeth your hearts with love, and zeal, and other graces; that comforts your consciences, and consumes your corruptions, and continues in you, sealing you to the day of redemption; even he it is that strengthens you against the power of the devil. But how doth the Spirit strengthen? I answer,

1. He teacheth you in and by your temptations. Luther could say, that three things made a good divine, meditation, prayer, and temptation. And indeed, when and where doth the holy Spirit reveal himself more fully unto his people than in the times of their temptations? It is said that at Massah and Meribah, the waters of strife and of temptation, there the Lord gave Israel all his statutes.

2. He bears up and upholds your hearts with graces. My grace is sufficient for thee, said the Lord to Paul: The Spirit of the Lord in your combats usually comes in with assisting grace; or if that be not enough, he comes in also with accepting grace. Tho' thy prayer be weak, and thy faith low, yet faith the Spirit, It is the time of temptation with my poor servant, and therefore I will take the duty tho' it be never so little.

3. The good angels wait upon you as a guard: Have they not a charge from God to see to your safety? And is not one angel stronger than all the devils? If a man were to pass by ship over a dangerous sea, full of rocks, pirates, robbers, would not letters of safe conduct be his comfort? but if a great navy should be sent to conduct him over, if the admiral should call out all his men of war to see him safely arrived, how much more comfortable would this be? Even thus God deals with us, he sends his angels, who willingly afford their ministry, because of their love to man: But in respect of God's word and charge, they are much more willing. O the strong motives that we have to fight! God, and Christ, and his spirits, and angels, all take our part. What greater dignities? What better defence? What greater solace? What better safety than this? to be attended and guarded, not by men (which we account an honour and happiness) but by angels, who pitch their tents about the saints? Psal. xxxiv. 8. Methinks the

knowledge, assurance, remembrance and meditation of this should marvelously comfort and encourage the people of God.

4. The spirits of the just made perfect with God, contribute their assistance: Do they not pray for the church in general? Do they not mind the condition of those who are yet militant upon earth? Do they not stand upon the walls of heaven, and call upon you to march up the hill after them; crying aloud, Fall on, and the city will be yours, as now it is ours? The same words that Paul spake, living, he even speaks now dead, 'Watch ye, stand fast, in the faith, quit yourselves like men,' 1 Cor. xvi. 13. The printed books, the lively examples of dead saints, call on you still to be valorous; do they not really speak in Job's language, 'Be of good courage for your souls, and for the glory of your God,' 2 Sam. x. 12.

5. Other saints on earth are in the same posture with yourselves; they are wrestling, they are all enduring a great fight of afflictions and temptations. Certainly you march in the midst of gallant spirits; Your fellow soldiers are every one the son of a prince, yea, of the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and this is their way to encourage you, and to be encouraged by you: There is not a watch you make, nor a stroke you strike, but it pleaseth them, and it refresheth them; as on the other side, there is not a negligence, or a fail, but it wounds them, and afflicts them.

6. The devil himself is not altogether so terrible as he seems. Do you look on him in these particulars,

1. He is but a creature, though he be stiled a principality and power, yet his power is but a created power; he is potent, but not omnipotent; he is the strong armed man, but Jesus Christ is stronger than he; and tho' you cannot, yet the Lord Jesus can easily disarm him, and take that away wherein he trusteth, Luke xi. 22.

2. He is a creature under a curse; this may take off much of that dreadfulnes which many look upon him with, 'Curled shalt thou be above all the beasts of the field,' Gen. iii. 14. O the encouragement that all our enemies (both that field serpent, and the old serpent called the devil) are under the divine curse. Surely God's curse is a weakening thing,

3. He

3. He is a wounded creature. 1. Wounded by Christ, 'He shall break thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,' Gen. iii. 15. The Lord Jesus breaks Satan's head, as he is our Head; he hath wounded him for us, and for our sakes. Here is comfort; alas! Satan was too strong for us hand to hand, and therefore our Lord first enters the list, and gives him a wound; and then, as Joshua, he bids us come, and tread on his neck. Thus when we read of Christ's glorious acts, That he overcame Satan, Mat. iv. 11. Led captivity captive, Eph. iv. 8. Spoiled principalities and powers, Col. ii. 15. Made his enemies his footstool, Mat. xxii. 44. Overcame those that war against him, Rev. xvii. 14. we are to understand that all these acts were for our benefit; and that for us he combated with and conquered all these foes. 2. He is wounded by the members of Christ. 'Satan is fallen from heaven like lightning, and made subject to the saints,' Luke x. 18; 19, 20. His weapons have been often battered and blunted; not only by Christ, but also by Christians. 'I write unto you, young men; because you have overcome the wicked one,' 1 John ii. 13, 14. Others have been, and if we will but wrestle, 'We also shall be more than conquerors thro' Christ that loved us,' Rom. viii. 37.

4. For he is a chained creature. 'The angel that came down from heaven had a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan; and bound him a thousand years,' Rev. xx. 1, 2. In this chain he is so confined, that he cannot stir until God slack his chain: Nor need we trouble ourselves, because it is said only for a thousand years; for indeed God hath ever kept him in fetters since his fall, either less or more, and he shall never shake them off again until dooms-day: 'He hath ever delivered him into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto the judgment of the great day,' 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. Oh what encouragement is this! think of it Christians; devils can do nothing without a commission from God. Though they ruined Job's state, yet they had their power from God; and tho' they invested his body with sad diseases, yet they were fain to ask new leave from God; they could not so much as enter

into swine but Christ must give them authority, and bid them go, Luke viii. 32. How should that animate us, that our greatest enemy is subject to the power of our best and dearest friend? Enough for motives.

S E C T. VI.

Use of Direction.

IS our spiritual combat a wrestling? Then some directions how we are to manage this spiritual combat. This is that special use which I ever aim at in all practical points. Many are convinced of such and such a duty, that know but little how to go about it: Others may indeed abound in their own sense, and they may in their own experiences find out some rules most proper for their own disposition, and most powerful for their own reformation; and for my part, I shall gladly leave them to themselves; yet for such who are not better furnished, and yet desire some help how to manage wisely this great duty of wrestling with devils, I shall prescribe for their use, and mine own (as the Lord shall enable) these following directions.

In our spiritual combat, two things are necessary to be known, 1. Satan's assaults. 2. Our repulses.

His assaults I shall trace according to the several periods of our life, wherein more especially he combats with us in such and such a kind: As in our infancy he combats thus; and in our youth, or time of conversion he combats thus; and in our riper years he combats thus; and in the end or period of life he combats thus. Now herein lies our duty.

1. To be acquainted with his several methods at such times.

2. To repel him in such a manner, and by such means, as are most suitable to his methods: And, O that the Lord would help, and strengthen me in this work! O that he would present his light and truth, that I may discover to you these works of darkness, both for the avoiding and conquering of him, *who is reserved for everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day, Jude 6.*

BOOK II.

CHAP. I. SECT. I.

Of the Time when Devils begin their first Assaults.

THE first period wherein Satan first begins to assault the elect, it is from their quickning in the womb, and during their infancy, till they become adult. Come then, and first learn we his methods; and, 2dly. Practise we those duties that concern us in our wrestling with him in these respects.

1. For Satan's first assaults; certain it is, that then he begins, when we begin first to live, and move, and have our being. Are we not by nature in Satan's power? Is not the devil then said to rule in us, when the soul and body do first meet, and are both defiled by sin? As it is said of the dragon, that *he stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, to devour her child as soon as it was born.* Rev. xii. 4. So may we say of every child as soon as it is quickned in the womb, that the great red dragon, the devil, stands ready to devour it. And upon this supposition, even in Augustine's time, there were exorcisms used at the baptism of infants; by which they signified that the child was under the power and dominion of Satan. We use not this ceremony now though it be very antient; we desire rather to content ourselves with the simplicity of the gospel in all the institutions and ordinances of Jesus Christ; but this discovers the ancient truths of Satan's assaults and kingdom over children by nature, even in the womb. *Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me,* saith David, Psal. li. v. 1. *I was shapen in iniquity;* in the very forming of the parts of his body, and disposing it for animation there was sin, tho' not implicitly and formally; yet initially, inchoatively and imperfectly, because the body was in tendency to make up man. 2. *And in sin did my mother conceive me:* It is in the Hebrew, *my mother did warm me, or nourish me:* Which relates not so much to the actual conception, as to the time that his mother did bear, and warm

the womb. The inference from the text is this, that so soon as that mass of the body is enlivened, and animated, so soon is original sin in man; and when original sin, like a leprosy, spreads itself over the whole man, the devil also doth seize upon him as his own: So that as a man is said to dwell in his own house, it is his home, he may do there what he will, such a right and claim hath the devil to a man by nature; he dwells in him, and reigns in him, and leads him captive at his will.

But if thus it be with us, whiles we are in the womb, is it not otherwise in our birth, and in our infancy, till we become adult? I answer,

1. So long as we are in nature it is all one; no sooner are we born, but we are atheists, idolaters, blasphemers, Sabbath-breakers, murderers, adulterers, thieves; false witnesses, covetous; not by actual transgression, but by an habitual disposition: As we are said to be men, because we have in us the image of men, and seeds of humanity, though we never did any manly action, seeing nothing is wanting but growth and maturity; so by as good right we are called sinners of all kinds, because we have the nature and very image of sin, and the seeds of all corruption living in us in our very infancy; which if we grow, will grow with us, and without preventing grace will come to full ripeness, if we ever attain unto perfect age. In this respect how should Satan but dwell in us, move in us, reign in us; and at our very birth, and during our infancy, do with us, and domineer it in us, even as he pleaseth?

2. So long as we are in infancy, and not adult, (supposing that we may live to the age when we may enjoy use of means, appointed by God for regeneration, justification, sanctification) it is very probable that we are in a state of nature, and vassals of Satan, as we were in the womb. Mr. Ford, a late divine, thus delivers himself; "I know no reason to conclude that God should break his own ordinary road of bestowing grace in infant-age, upon those that live to the use of means appointed to that end, and I suppose, (excepting the case of John the Baptist, who yet may be looked upon as privileged by an extraordinary account: to wit, that he was born in a state of grace, and

Witness to Christ, as his fore-runner in the womb, as well as in the wilderness) it can hardly be asserted *de facto*, concerning any one that ever lived to the perfect use of reason, that he was justified and sanctified from the womb, or any period of infancy whatsoever; nor have we any scripture warrant to expect it; Nay, it were against the very end for which God appoints the use of means, seeing by bestowing saving grace out of them, to those that live to enjoy them, God would in a sort make void his own institutions: For what need of them, when the ends of them may be otherwise attained? I confess, grace is wrought in some very early, possibly in childhood, but ordinarily 'tis after they come under catechising." His opinion is that the instance of Jeremy being sanctified from the womb, is but only a setting him apart for his office, Jer. i. 8. 7 And if this be so, then Satan keeps his hold for this first period, i. e. from our first quickning in the womb, and during our infancy till we become adult.

S E C T. II.

Of the Manner of the Devil's assaulting at that Time.

BUT how do the devils assault, or tyrannize it in us at such a time? I answer, *They do it quietly, and without resistance.* The strong armed man, Satan, quietly keeps the house; and the things, that he possesseth are in peace, Luke xi. 21. Poor creatures in this case are as prisoners, content to be tied in the fetter of sin; and therefore to what purpose should Satan rage it in their consciences? I know Satan is subtle, and more exactly watcheth them that are sprung of godly parents: He observes from time to time how they bewail the sin of their babes, and how they press God with a covenant of grace, and how they dedicate their children to the Lord, and how they present them to God in that ordinance of baptism: And tho' for all this he holds his claim, and leads them as captives at his will, yet I verily believe, upon these observations, he looks very enviously and maliciously upon such children; and if it were not that God hedgeth them about with a wall of holy and blessed angels, he would do his utmost to cut off their lives in their polluted state of nature; and immediately hurry them to hell, unto the judgment of the

great day. However he matters not much, whiles he keeps his possession; he knows well enough till they are actually regenerated, he is their Lord; he needs not plant any of his strongest batteries, main temptations against them yet; and therefore in that respect, as a keeper of such prisoners, he may sleep securely; he commands with ease; he keeps the house quiet; and all are obeyant to his will.

S E C T. III.

Of the state of Infants dying at that time, either in the womb, or in their infancy.

IF this be so, then well may we say of our infants dying at this time; 'Oh, that they had never been conceived! Oh, that they never had come out of the womb into the world!' not so neither; for among infants some are elect, and some are not; and some are within a covenant of grace, and some are not.

1. Some infants are elect. "For the children not being yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said, the elder should serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." When Jacob was but an infant in the womb, he was elect; and if Jacob had died in the cradle, he had been saved. Hence believing parents may comfort their souls concerning those children that early die, in that they may be elected, and by consequence eternally saved.

2. Some infants are within a covenant of grace, and this speaks more encouragement. Indeed we cannot look into the book of life which is in heaven, and thereby know that the name of our dying infants are written there; yet we may look into the covenant of grace, and satisfy ourselves as in the effect of their election: are not the children of believing parents the reputed members of Jesus Christ? is not the same promise made to the children that is made to the parents, for receiving both as members? 'I am thy God, and the God of thy seed,' said the Lord to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7. 'And the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off,' said Peter to the Jews. God is in covenant with our infants as soon as they

they are living in the womb, and God is sacramentally and solemnly engaged to our infants in baptism, as soon almost as they are born in the world: nor doth it hinder, that such infants were shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin; for that is first which is natural, and then that which is spiritual. The devil first reigns in them as his subjects, and then the Lord 'passing by, and seeing them in their blood; he saith to them in their blood, live; yea, he saith to them in their blood, live; that time is a time of love, and therefore the Lord spreads his skirts over them, and covers their nakedness, and swears to them (in baptism) and enters into a covenant with them, and so they become his, Ezek. xvi. 6, 7, 8.

But when is it that infants dying in the womb, or in their infancy, are entered into this covenant of grace? I answer,

1. *Externally*, the infants of church-members are in covenant so soon as they are quick in the womb.

2. *Internally*, they are in covenant so soon as by the intervention of the Spirit they are wrought on savingly and effectually. Now this may be either in the womb; and so godly parents may comfortably hope of all their infants as die in the womb, before they see this world's light; or after birth at any time before they become adult: only as we will not limit the Spirit, so we cannot but probably think, that the time of the Spirit's regenerating is ordinarily in this case, the very time of their baptism. Mr. Ford in his *Infant-baptism* speaks thus: 'Although God be not bound in his ordinance of baptism, so as to give grace to all elect children at the instant of their baptism, yet seeing sacraments are not only bare signs and seals of the covenant, but conduits of the grace of the covenant, when and in what manner God is pleased to dispense it; I know not why the sacrament of baptism to some elect children, I mean to those that die in infancy, may not be indeed the laver of regeneration, and they receive the grace of baptism with the sign. For no person can enter into the kingdom of heaven, except his person be justified, and his sanctified, and God useth to dispense these graces ordinance or other; and seeing such infants live:

capable of any other ordinance, why should I not believe them regenerate in baptism? If this opinion may be thought of any favour to the Papacy, that holds the sacrament to be effectual, *ex opere operato*; He answers solidly, that this opinion stands at a great distance from theirs; for that by their doctrine they make no difference between good and bad, elect or non-elect, in the participation of those benefits; They hold that in baptism all infants that receive it are actually regenerate, whereas he restrains the efficacy of that ordinance, only to the elect; and he admits not all of them neither, for he excludes those of the elect that afterwards live to come under the means of regeneration; only he supposeth a possibility and probability, that in some elect infants (*viz.* those that die in infancy) the season of God's doing that, which all Christians acknowledge, is done at one time or other before the separation of soul and body, (*sic.* their renovation, justification and sanctification) is rather the time of baptism, than any other time.

If any demand, how can infants in the womb, or in their infancy, be justified and sanctified? Is not justification bestowed on believing? and is not sanctification conveyed to us in the attendance upon the outward and ordinary means? The answer is, that God justifies them upon another account, and sanctifies them in another way, than those that are of age: And for this my author cites another saying, As in the bodily life, one organ is the instrument of nourishment to the child in the womb, another when born; so in the conveyance of spiritual life, it's one way to a child, another to one of years. For this is not the most universal proposition of the gospel, (he that believeth shall be saved) but this, (he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life:) Now God gives his Son by the Spirit, and we receive him by faith; but God can supply the want of that hand in a child, by dropping into his mouth what he cannot receive with his hand, as I may say.

All this I have said of infants dying in the womb or in their infancy, but as for such, whose life God prolongs till they come to years of age and discretion, I have already delivered my mind, in the former sections.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Privileges of elect Infants living beyond that time, but for the present under Satan's power.

WE see it may be well with elect infants dying in their infancy; but what say we of them who may live longer, and are for the present under Satan's power? Have they no privilege above those children that are not elect?

I answer, Yes; and I may instance in these particulars:

1. They have God's love. Jacob have I loved, said God to Jacob before he was born: Which must needs be as true of Jacob when he was born. There is in God a love of benevolence, and that is afforded to the elect infants whilst yet carnal and dead in sin: As a woman lately conceiving loves her future fruit, so the Lord loves those whom he purposeth for himself. Indeed his love of complacency is not till their change and conversion, but his love of benevolence is from eternity.

2. They have a right to the covenant of fore-fathers. This difference the apostle makes between Jews and Jews. 'The election have obtained it, and the election are beloved for the father's sake,' Rom. xi. 7, 28. I speak here of the covenant of God with fore-fathers, as it undergoes an abstracted consideration from the personal covenant with us by faith. Infants of believers are far from actual faith, and yet they have this privilege, that the ancient covenant betwixt God and their fore-fathers hath run (as it were) down in a line to them; and upon this account godly fathers many times speak for their tender babes, before they are able to speak for themselves; they plead a covenant entailed, and put it in suit for them, while they are not yet but a span long, as every such a one should say, Lord, here is a child conceived in sin, and born in sin; the very guilt and pollution of his nativity renders him obnoxious to eternal fire; and yet thou hast said, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed; and the promise is to you, and to your children; and thou hast siled thyself a God, shewing mercy to thousands of generations of them that love thee; and thy word is clear, that the elect
by

beloved for the father's sake; now therefore be merciful to my poor child that comes of such and such a race, even for the covenant sake.

3. They have a right to the inward part of baptism, as to regeneration, renovation, remission of sins, &c. You will say, If infants were then regenerated, they could not be under Satan's power, I grant the improbability of their being actually regenerate until years of discretion, and yet by baptism they have *jus ad rem*, a remote right to those initial graces. Sacraments were never intended by God to exert their virtue only in, or during the administration. As in the Lord's supper, Christians by their experiences can testify, that the benefit is most what after the receiving of it: So in baptism it may be many years after the receiving of it; for otherwise it would follow, that baptism would be altogether a barren sacrament all our lives long, except only during the little time of its administration: Oh what a blessed privilege is this! the non-elect may indeed be baptized, and have the washing of water; but the elect sooner or later are baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: They have that initial sacrament for the bestowing of initial graces upon them in the Lord's own time.

4. They have the tutelage of angels. Are not they all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb. i. 14/ It is true, they are under Satan's power; devils move in them, dwell in them, reign in them; they keep the house of poor infant's souls, and they are in quiet and peaceable possession; yet notwithstanding all this, the holy angels have a charge from God to see to those infants, and to preserve them warily as chosen vessels (mangre the dominion of Satan) against the time he shall manifest himself unto them. But of this privilege more fully in another discourse.

S E C T. V.

Of the duty of Wrestling that concerns parents in this respect.

THE duties that concern us in wrestling with Satan as to his first assaults, are either parents duties on children.

1. For the parents, they are to perform some duties before, and some after their children's birth.

1. The duties before they are born are these,

1. Let the parents be humbled for that sin which they transmit to their children. Oh how should this pierce their hearts, that in Adam all sinned, and by reason of that sin, both they and theirs are defiled. Good Lord! may they say, is not this lamentable, that we should derive sin from our parents, and that we should convey the same sin to our children? that we should make our little ones so soon as they live, vassals of Satan, and objects of God's wrath? Oh the woe of this sin! did we but rightly consider it, what is this original sin but in some sense all sin, and universal guilt? it makes the understanding guilty, the will guilty, the affections guilty, even guilt all over; there is no part of man, no not his mind, nor his conscience, but it is all over defiled with this sin; this is the sin that is the root and fountain of all the actual evils we commit every day: Is not every one tempted and drawn aside of his own lusts? O wretched babes, whom we have begotten after his own image! how just were it now that God should turn you out of your mother's womb into hell flames? and are we the instruments of your damnation, except the mercy of God prevent it? O deplorable condition! O wretched men that we are! Here's matter of humiliation.

2. Let parents call to remembrance, and improve the free and gracious covenant which God hath made with them and their posterity; *I am thy God, and the God of thy seed*, Gen. xvii. 7, 9. *For the promise is to you and to your children*, Acts ii. 39. It is true, that by natural generation the children of believing parents are defiled with sin, and so under wrath; and yet they are holy by covenant and free acceptance. We see the promise is not only to the parents, but also to the children. Oh then that this promise might come into remembrance! Oh that parents would improve this promise, and make sure as much as in them lies, that their children are indeed under the promise! But what can they do to make this hopefully sure? I answer,

1. Let

1. Let them make sure that they themselves are under the promise; if their evidences are but clear, that they have an interest in the covenant of grace, and that God is their God in Christ; then may they have a comfortable hope that God will be the God even of their seed also.

2. Let them give themselves unto a God by a renewed covenant. Let them again resign up themselves in all things to be guided by his word. Surely they that would give their children up unto God, must first give up themselves. As the promise is made to the faithful, so that faith which truly acts in dedication of children to God, must first draw the parties themselves to yield up their souls and bodies as a living sacrifice unto the same God.

3. Let them offer their children up unto God by hearty prayer. God's promise to accept our children calls for prayer on our part, that he would be pleased to make good his promise. Thus David reasoned, 'Thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house; therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee,' 2 Sam. ii. 27. And so should every parent say unto God, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, thou hast covenanted to be my God; and the God of my seed; therefore I am bold to intreat thy fatherly acceptance of my poor infant; Hast thou not said; 'that children are an heritage of the Lord, and that the fruit of the womb is thy reward;' Psal. cxxvii. 3. Oh that this child may be one of thy heritage, of the society of saints, and that thou wouldst be to it a God and Father in the Lord Jesus Christ; I press thee with thy promise; and I rely on thy promise; why, Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.

2. The duties after they are born are these:

1. Let the parents give up their children again to God. We read in Christ's time, that some devout persons brought their children to Christ, putting them into his hands and arms, Luke x. 13, 16. And thus should parents deal with their children; no sooner they are born and received by their parents from God; but they should again by prayer and thanksgiving be offered up to God. Parents should put them into his hands, and cast them in-

to

to his arms: *g. d.* Blessed Lord, thou hast given us in mercy these tender babes, and now we see them perfect in limbs, and like thee in their souls, (for which we ever bless thy name) we desire now to throw them into the hands of thy fatherly providence, and to cast them into the arms of thy everlasting mercy: Own them we humbly pray thee as thy children in Jesus Christ.

2. Let parents tender them to the ordinance of baptism, that they may receive the sign and seal of regeneration. But what needs (say some Phanatics) is not the promise itself sufficient? and cannot God make it good unto our children without this sacrament? I answer, Yes, he can; but seeing God so far condescends to our weakness, as to give us a sign and seal for the confirmation of our faith, in this case to slight it, to neglect it, to refuse it, what is it but to tempt God? This sacrament is a sign ordained by God, and shall we refuse it? This was Ahaz's case, the Lord bids him ask a sign for confirmation of his faith in the promise, but he refused it as a thing needless; *I will not ask a sign, neither will I tempt the Lord,* Isa. vii. 12. Nay, Ahaz is not asking it at God's command, therein thou didst tempt the Lord. Indeed not to believe without a sign, were in some sense to tempt the Lord: Master, we would see a sign from thee, said the Scribes and Pharisees to Christ, for which he calls them an evil and adulterous generation, Mat. xii. 38, 39. But where God affords a sign for the help of our infirmity, there to refuse it, is both presumption and rebellion. Nor is this sacrament only a sign, but a seal; and howsoever the promise be made good without a seal, yet cannot we urge the promise with the same evidence and ground of assurance, when the seal is added to the promise, otherwise it must needs follow, that the sacraments add nothing at all to the covenant, in point of certainty and evidence. Away, away with these heterodox doctrines, and let all that fear God take heed of contempning or neglecting this ordinance of God. Christians, bring your children to baptism; and when you bring them, endeavour to affect your hearts with suitable dispositions to that action. As,

1. Have a high thankful esteem of the rich mercy of
God

God in Christ to you and yours. Is it not an honour that God should make your issue the nursery of the visible church, that Christianity through a covenant of grace should descend in your line, and become in a sort (as we may say) hereditary. Surely the truest nobility is to be made a Christian. Theodosius was more glad to be made a Christian than to be made the emperor of the world. You would think it a great honour if you could but make your children heirs of the world, but what honour is this, that God makes them by covenant and seal heirs of heaven? Oh for an heart raised up and enlarged in thankfulness for this!

2. Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say rejoice. Is there not cause? What is this day of baptism but the day of your children's espousals to Jesus Christ? Now they have his name put upon them, and he makes them a jointure beyond the abilities of all the monarchs in the world. Now they are his (a) soldiers, his sons and daughters by a spirit of adoption sealed in baptism. I remember when Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, he blessed them thus, *Let my name be named upon them, and the name of my Father Abraham and Isaac*, Gen. xlviii. 16. He adopted them for his sons, they must be two of the twelve tribes of Israel, to have an inheritance with them in the land of Canaan: So when God puts his name upon your children, he signifieth and assureth that they are his sons, Gal. iii. 16, 17. 'Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus: for as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ, have put on Christ.'

S E C T. VI.

Of the Duties that concern Children in this respect.

FOR the children or parties themselves when grown.

1. Let them bewail their own original sin. Oh

(a) *Cautum erat apud Romanos, ne quis ad bellum prius accederet, quam jurasset omnia se strenue facturum quæ præceperat imperator, juramentum hoc sub Augusto nomine sacramenti venditabant. Idem vocabulum mutuata et Ecclesia, suo baptismo applicatum voluit, ut ostenderet omnes et singulos, qui sacro fonte abluti sunt, ipso facto conscribi in milites.*

D. ARROUSMITH *Tactica Sacra.*
that

What as this is the first sin, so it might be first taken notice of! Oh, that as soon as children come to ripeness they will consider thus: *Blissed Lord, how comes this to pass?* the Psalmist tells me, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me,* Psal. li. 5. Oh, I am a child of Adam, the son or daughter of a sinful brood: He was the rock whence I was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence I was digged, and who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. As soon as ever I lived, I was polluted, and for that one sin if I had never sinned more, the Lord might justly have condemned my soul long since to hell, and I am yet alive? Why Lord, what a long reprieve have I enjoyed? How many years have I lived in a condemned condition? Oh, that I had been a child of a toad, or serpent, or venomous creature; for surely God doth not loathe and abhor their young ones, they are not by nature objects of God's wrath, neither doth Satan rule in them; nor are they exposed to eternal torments, but thus is he sinful offspring of all mankind. Now I wonder not that Luther in the depths, and troubles, and sorrows of his heart, because of this sin, cried out so pitifully, Oh that I had never been a man! Now I wonder not that Paul, beset with this original sin, was forced to say, Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? In this, so the like manner, should they bewail themselves. Many are apt to mourn for actual sin, but few mourn for this sin that first made the breach, and began the controversy betwixt God and man. Surely the horrible nature of this first sin is not well understood: Christians, let me tell you, next unto the sin of the Holy Ghost, and contempt of the gospel, this is the greatest sin that cries loudest in God's ears for vengeance day and night against a world of men. Oh then let children grown take notice of this, and bewail this sin.

2, Let them urge the covenant of God made to them in their fathers. *g. d.* Lord we are sinners from the womb, and yet by good providence we are sprung from a believing race: Was there not a league of old betwixt thee and our fathers? and wilt thou not remember thy gracious promise to them and us? Should David do kindness to

Mephibotheth for his father Jonathan's sake, and are there no remains of love in thy breast towards the posterity of thy old dear friends? Why, remember Lord, the unfeigned faith that dwelt in our grandmother Lois, or in our mother Eunice, or in some other of our godly progenitors; and remember how often they acted their faith upon that promise, that thou wouldst be the God of them and theirs; did they not press thee with thy promise on our behalf? Did they not pray to thee once and again to be good and gracious unto us their children? Why, dear Father, the God of our fathers, and our God, wilt thou please to read over the petitions which are yet on file in heaven on our behalf; nay, wilt thou please to read over thy answers to them, when as yet our bones were only written in thy book? Oh let it never be said that children descended of such a prayerful race are cast out of thy favour, or that the prayers of that race should become unsuccessful unto us, on whose behalf they were put up. What tho' we were conceived and born in sin? And what tho' Satan doth elaim and challenge us for his own, yet thou wast pleased to enter into a covenant of grace, and thou hast stiled thyself to be the God of Abraham and his seed: O now remember thy word, and remember thy promise, and remember thy covenant, and remember our fathers in covenant with thee for thy mercies sake.

3. Let them sue out the grace and benefit of their former baptism: They had the outward washing before, but not the inward washing till now: Why now let them press hard for this. Now Satan wrestles, and now should they wrestle, (as we shall hear more particularly another time) now should every such a one cry to God, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly; O rescue thy creature out of Satan's slavery! see he holds me fast in his net, and gins, and snares, and he will not let me go; he tells me, I am one of his subjects, a goat of his fold; but Lord, dost thou not know that I have had thy sheep-mark upon me from a lamb? Was not I born in thy family? and did not I in baptism put on Christ sacramentally? O that now I may put him on savingly! It is true, the sacramental washing in water is not enough, and is it not high time for me now

to make out after sacramental graces, to cleanse my filthy nature. Lord I come to the fountain opened in the gospel for sin, and for uncleanness; O sprinkle clean water upon me, regenerate me, as thou hast already with water, so now with the Spirit; bestow on me the inward and spiritual part of my baptism, sanctify me in pursuance of thy promise sealed therewith by thy word, and present my soul to thyself without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

4. Let them repent of their apostasy, and breach of vows, since they were admitted into covenant with God. This brings into their remembrance all their actual sins, and seasonably are they to be remembered, and repented of when they mind conversion. The Spirit's first work is to convince of sin; of sin original, and of sin actual, and amongst other aggravations of actual sins, this is a great and mighty aggravation, the breach of vows. But what vows were made by them while they were infants? I answer, they vowed to be God's and Christ's; they vowed to forsake the world, and flesh, and devil, and to manage war against them all their days: They vowed to fight under the banner of Christ, and to be his soldiers, and to maintain his cause, and to promote his kingdom. For understanding whereof, we must take notice of a double vow: The first is a virtual vow, when we vow legally, though in our own persons we promise nothing. The second is a formal vow, when in express terms we take upon us any obligation: Infants while infants cannot vow formally; but they do virtually; their fathers stand instead of themselves and infants, and privately at their first quickning in the womb, but solemnly at their baptism in the church; they bind themselves and their seed to God in this manner, *Know all men by these presents, that I. A. do hereby oblige myself, and my heirs, and posterity, from me descending, to the great God of heaven and earth, in all the duties required in the law and gospel.* Now this vow is it that virtually was made by infants. They could not do it in their own persons; and therefore by a gracious prolepsis God accepts it on their behalf, thus made and signed, by their mediate or immediate parents. And have they not many and many a time broken these sacred vows? Have they not

as soon as they could learn to speak, begun to swear and lye? Have they not very early forfeited their bonds, and entered into a contrary covenant and confederacy with the devil, and death, and hell, and their own lusts, and maintained a war rather with God than devils, with abundance of youthful heat and activity? Oh then what remains but that they should remember from whence they are fallen, and repent and renew their covenant with God in their own persons, with all possible speed and seriousness. And thus much of our wrestling with Satan, or repelling Satan as to his first assaults.

C H A P. II. S E C T. I.

Of the Devil's assaults in our Youth, or at the time of Conversion.

THE second period, wherein Satan assaults or combats with us, is from our youth to our riper years, or especially from the beginning to the end of our conversion. And in prosecution of this, *1st*, Learn we some of their depths, and wiles, and methods of Satan in his assaults. And, *2^{dly}*, Practise we those duties that concerns us in our wrestling with him in these respects.

1. For Satan's assaults. Then he begins his strongest batteries, or main temptations, when we are first entering into a renewed state: Now this is most usual in the days of our youth. Thus many of our worthies observe, Mr. Ford, speaking of young people, saith, Amongst them usually the stream of converting grace most runs. It may be in some grace is wrought very early, even in childhood, but ordinarily 'tis after they come under catechising, and are more adult. And Mr. Burges thus, Conversion doth not only belong to the old, but to the young; yea, commonly conversion is sooner wrought upon the younger sort of people; for they have not resisted the grace of God so much, they have not provoked God to give them up to their own heart's lusts, and desires, as many aged persons have; so then let young ones hearken to sermons, let them attend to what the ministers of God exhort. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth; and it is good to bear the yoke in thy youth; it is good to feel the bitterness of sin betimes, Eccl. xii. 1. Lam. iii. 27. And Vortier

ter thus, The Lord can convert and bring home to himself at all times, in middle age, in old age, at the very last, as the thief upon the cross; yet the time of effectual calling is more ordinary in the time of youth. Some have observed the time of effectual calling to be between the years of eighteen and thirty, most commonly. And I believe that most saints experience, that the Lord wrought upon them in their younger days. Marriages are most in younger times, so are spiritual contracts in Jesus Christ. David was good when young, Daniel a young prophet, Timothy a young preacher, Samuel began with God sometimes, Abijah good when a child, so was Josiah. Hammers thus, Those who in their infancy were considered as parts of their parents; and so by virtue of their parents membership enjoyed the ordinance of baptism; when once grown up to maturity and ripeness of years, they are to be looked upon and considered in themselves, and no longer as in their parents, and therefore as being in a capacity so to do, they ought now to take hold of the covenant for themselves, and to render a personal account of their faith. It pleaseth God, that many do so even very early; which agrees with the former opinion, that some are regenerated after they come under catechizing. It was the use of the Jews, as Mr. Buxtorf reports, that so soon as their circumcised children were able to speak, they taught them some select places of scripture, and so proceeding on by degrees at thirteen years of age, they were called *filii precepti*, sons of the precept; and then they were to receive the passover, as saith Mr. Weems, and to observe the 613 precepts, which comprehended in them the sum of the Mosaical law, and Jewish religion, and then they themselves were accounted guilty and liable to punishment, both divine and human, if they did transgress the law, whereas before their faults were imputed to their fathers, of whom the punishment was exacted. The manner of the Jews it seems was thus: The son being thirteen years complete, the father calls ten Jews to witness, saying; That his son is now of age, hath been instructed in the precepts, well learned their customs, and can readily recite the benedictions and daily prayers, and therefore he is wil-

ling to be henceforth free, and to shake off the sin of his son; after which he concludes with prayer, beseeching God, that his son may grow up into many years and good works.

I hope, I may say of Gentiles as well as Jews, that conversion is sometimes very early, even as early as at thirteen years of age, though it be not ordinary. And oh! how good is it for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, seeing it must be born at one time or other? The burden of sin at that age will be the lighter, the flowing of heavenly affections will be the sweeter the removal of sin, in all likelihood, will be sooner, at least the surer; God having engaged himself, that *they that seek him early shall find him*, Prov. viii. 17. Satan knows all this very well, and therefore he sets a stricter watch on youth; he observes all the motions, stirrings, actions of the soul, and of God's Spirit at such a time most narrowly: And if he spy any thing that may probably disturb him of his possession, he presently foams, and fumes, and prepares himself for battle, and now he is ready with all his fiery darts (his thousands of temptations) to throw them at him that would throw down his kingdom.

S E C T. II.

Of the Occasion of Satan's first and furious Assault.

BUT what means Satan, that he begins thus to rage? It was but ere while that he kept house quietly, and possessed all in peace; and he is now disturbed? O yes; for now the soul begins to consider: It was but lately, that the man was at sermon, or read some book, or observed some providence, or heard some pray: Some gospel news or glad tidings is freshly come, that Jesus Christ is in the field, sent of God on this very account to rescue souls from the devil's power; and to that end he hath made a proclamation, That if any poor sinner weary of the devil's government, and heavy laden with the chains of his spiritual bondage, will but come and repair to Christ, he shall have protection from God's justice, the devil's wrath, and sin's dominion. This, or the like message, hath persuaded the soul to pause, to consider, to ponder and commune with itself what it had best to do.

Consideration

Consideration is the first step to repentance: The prodigal first came to himself before he came to his father; he considered with himself what a starving condition he was in; his husks were but poor meat, and yet he had not enough of them neither; but at his father's house was bread enough, and to spare, and should he perish with hunger? It is usual with the soul thus at first to consider with itself, And am I Satan's vassal, and under Satan's power? And shall I continue in this state? Is not the sweet government of Christ a thousand times better than the tyranny of Satan? And is not Christ's rewards a thousand times better than the devil's wages? What! is not heaven better than hell? And did not I promise to fight under Christ's banner against the world, flesh, and devil? How is it then that I have served him thus long? And that yet he leads me captive at his will and pleasure? What if this night I should leave this world in this state? What would become of me to all eternity? Could I be content to lose God, and Christ, and the joy above, and to dwell with devils, and all these infernal fiends below? Consider, O my soul! and have sad thoughts on these weighty and everlasting affairs; for as the tree falleth, so it must lie for ever and ever. This, or the like consideration, is the devil's alarm: Now he is occasioned to bestir himself, or he sees he is gone; and therefore as a giant awoke out of his sleep, he renews and shakes himself, and begets the soul with these several temptations following.

S E C T. III.

Of the several immediate Assaults that Satan at first doth make,

HIS assaults in this case are either immediate or mediate; by himself, or aids.

I. He assaults by himself, either by removing those pious thoughts tending to holiness, or by injecting those impious thoughts as tend to wickedness.

1. He endeavours to remove our pious thoughts. *q. d.* What do these strangers here? How came these guests into my house and dwelling without my leave? Are these fit companions for the soul where I bear rule? Away with them, shut them out of doors, for I cannot endure them in my territories.

2. He injects impious thoughts instead of good. These are the darts which he throws into the soul at pleasure; and now he is most busy lest the soul want work to busy itself withal. By his good will, faith Gurnah, the soul should not have one thought of heaven or hell, from one end of the week to the other; and that he may have as few as may be, he keeps him full handed with work; the sinner grinds, and he is filling the hopper, that the mill may not stand still: He is with the sinner as soon as he awakes, and fills his wretched heart with some wicked thoughts; and all the day long he watcheth him, and injects more ill thoughts; and at night like a careful jailor he locks him up again in his chamber, with more bolts and fetters upon him, not suffering him to sleep as he lies in his bed, till he hath done him some mischief.

Before I proceed, I shall propound these questions,

1. Whether Satan knows our thoughts? 2. Whether Satan can shut the door that good thoughts may not enter? 3. Whether Satan can at pleasure inject sinful thoughts, and so set on the soul to embrace them, and to tamper with them?

1. Whether Satan knows our thoughts? I answer, As thoughts are taken strictly or simply, merely for conceits, apprehensions, meditations, discussions, deliberations, which the understanding or mind in and by itself, or by the help of fancy frames within itself, they are not known unto Satan: But as thoughts are taken largely, conjunctly, or as they are accompanied and waited on with the stirred up images of the fancy, and passions of the body; so our thoughts, as well as words and actions, are known to Satan. Now, I must confess, few thoughts are in us, but they stir up the fancy, or some affection of fear, or joy, or grief, or some such like; and therefore in that respect we have very few thoughts but they are known to Satan. That Satan hath an insight into the fancy and the images therein, there is no doubt; and that Satan hath an insight into the passions, which are but the flowing and re-flowing of corporal spirits, the most will grant; it must therefore needs follow, that howsoever the immediate acts, which are immanent in the soul itself, are utterly hidden from Satan,

Satan, yet as those acts do pass thro' and appear, and are put forth in the body and corporeal organs, either outwardly in action, or inwardly in the images of the fancy, or in the passions, so they may be discerned and known by Satan.

2. Whether Satan can shut the door, that good thoughts may not enter? I answer, in natural men, as yet unregenerate, he may shut the common gate of the fancy, that no good thoughts shall enter in that way; and the reason is, because the devil (so to speak) hath the keys in his own hands of all the rooms, next to the privy chamber; he rules there, and locks or unlocks at his pleasure. For the better understanding of this, we must know that within men are several rooms or chambers; the fancy, the affections, the heart or soul, which consists of the understanding and will; the understanding is joined to the fancy, as the next room to it; and the will is joined to the affections, as the next room to it; hence the fancy brings in to the understanding, and the affections bring in to the will: And on the other side, the understanding imprints much upon the fancy what it conceives, and the will imprints much upon the affections what it commands: Now for the utter rooms, as Satan can discern them intuitively, so he can work upon them at his pleasure; in the fancy he can make such compositions, as the understanding may presently take off, and read what is written there; and in the sensitive passions, such as love, hatred, anger, concupiscence, he can so move and humour the spirits in which they float, that the will is apt to choose and command accordingly as the passions are moved there; but for the most inner room or privy chamber, wherein we place the understanding and will, as Satan cannot intuitively or immediately discern it, so neither can he imperiously or efficaciously work upon it. Indeed, saith Mr. Burges, in his treatise of original sin, to speak strictly, the devil hath no efficient power over the rational part of a man, he cannot change the will, he cannot alter the heart of a man, neither doth he know the thoughts of a man, so that the utmost he can do in tempting of a man to sin, is by suasion and suggestion only; but then how doth the devil do this? even by work-
in

ing upon the imagination; learned men think this to be his method, That he observeth the temper and bodily constitution of a man, and thereupon suggests to his fancy, and injects his fiery darts therein, by which the mind and will come to be wrought upon: For it is Aristotle's rule, that *phantasmata movent intellectum, sicut sensibilia sensum*. The phantasmas and imagination move the understanding, as the objects of sense being present do presently move the sense; the devil then, tho' he hath no imperious efficacy over the understanding and will, yet because he can stir and move the imagination, it follows, that any sin in the imagination, tho' but in the outward works of the soul, yet doth it quickly lay hold on all. Well then, if Satan be lord of the outer works, and if thro' those doors and chambers every good thought must usually enter before it comes into the privy chamber; if, as the schoolmen say, the understanding receives things by the mediation first of the external senses, then of the fancy, of which the memory is the treasure, so that all comes to us in ordinary no way but that; how easily may we conclude, that Satan will bar, and lock, and shut those doors in men unregenerate, that no good thought shall enter in that way; Nor doth this at all trench on that prerogative of God, who is said alone to be the heart-searcher, the understanding's light, the will's determiner; for he knows either immediately how to speak to the soul, or he can countermand the devil's power, and speak by the senses and fancy, in spite of the malice of Satan and all his power.

3. Whether Satan can at his pleasure inject sinful thoughts and set on the soul to embrace them, or to tamper with them? I answer: As he hath a power to hinder good thoughts, so he hath a power to suggest evil thoughts. It is clearly and expressly said of Judas, that *the devil put it in his heart to betray Christ*, John xiii. 2. The devil being a spirit, had access to his spirit, and so instilled his suggestions into him. As the Lord Christ did breathe upon his disciples, and so they received the Holy Ghost, and were filled with the Spirit; so Satan breathes filthy suggestions into the spirits of wicked men, and fills them with all manner of wickedness, malice, unrighteousness, he fills them with

with the spirit of hell; Why hath Satan filled thine heart, said Peter to Ananias? Acts v. 3. Satan had filled his heart to lie to the Holy Ghost. I know the devil tempts several ways; as sometimes he presents, and holds up an object, and so he dealt with Jesus Christ, presenting the world's glory to him in a map, or landscape: And usually objects are first represented, which he causeth to dwell upon the fancy, till the heart be insinared: But sometimes, yea oftentimes the devil tempts through the immision of thoughts, which he doeth also by the help of fancy, for otherwise how could the devil tempt to despair, or to blasphemy, or to spiritual sins? or how should he blind the mind by carnal imaginations, and conceits, and obstinate prejudices against the truth? And these thoughts once immitted, may be continued in a discourse, till at last the soul both tampers with them, and yields unto them. I have done with these questions; and now we see how Satan assaults by himself.

SECTION IV.

Of the several Mediate Assaults that Satan at first doth make.

HE assaults mediately, and by his aids. He likes not that the soul should have any thoughts of leaving him, or of coming to Christ: The very first meditation gives all the legions of hell an alarm, as it were; they are as much troubled at it as Herod and Jerusalem were when they heard the news that Christ was born: And therefore they call in all their aids, and command them to stifle those holy thoughts and considerations.

These aids are either the world or the flesh.

1. By the world I understand impious, carnal, and unbelieving men, with all their baits and enticements unto vanity; and all their discouragements, afflictions and miseries, wherewith they hinder God's children in travelling the path of righteousness, which leads to heaven. This wicked world assaults us on both sides; on the right-hand it offers us the bait of pleasure, honours, riches, that thereby it may allure us to swallow the hook of sin: It casts before us golden apples, that by stopping down to gather them, we may be hindered in running the Christian race.

race, and so lose the goal and garland of everlasting glory. On the left hand, it encounters us with threats, miseries, afflictions, poverty, ignominy; all which being terrible in the eyes of flesh and blood, so far prevail with some, that they move them to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

Methinks I imagine the world speaking to the soul in such a language as this: What strangers are these that disturb our dwelling? Have not we possessed this heart to many years? and must we now be gone, and give up our room to foreigners that invade? Come, take up other thoughts of the sweet and pleasure of this world; here soul, we offer thee wealth; or if that will not allure, thou shalt have honour; or if that will not prevail, thou shalt have pleasure. As Balak dealt with Balaam, who first sent under-messengers, and they not prevailing, he yet again sent princes, more, and more honourable than they; and they came to Balaam, and said to him, 'Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, let nothing I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me, for I will promote thee unto very great honour, Numb. xii. 15, 16. So saith the world, Let nothing I pray thee, divorce thee and me; for I will promote thee unto very great honour. Or, if these allurements do not divert thy soul, but still it considers; Oh, what will become of me in the other world? Then doth the world frown, and threaten, and boast of his great strength, then he marcheth against the soul with all his forces, sometimes hiding his troops in the ambushments of worldly vanities; and sometimes drawing out his forces in open view: *q. d.* Come afflictions! come persecutions! and set on this soul with force and violence! will it needs run away from us in the ways of godliness? be you like briars in the way to hold it from going forwards; or be you like thorns under its feet to vex and torment it, that it may be weary in its passage. And, Oh the vexations, griefs, fears, and torments, which the frowning world darts into the soul at such a time!

2. By the flesh, I mean not the body and the flesh thereof, but that corruption of nature, which hath defiled the body and soul, being spread and mixt with every part

part of both, even as the light is mixt with darkness in the twilight, or dawning of the day; hereby we find ourselves prone to all sin, and ready to entertain all temptations, which promise the satisfying of the lusts of the flesh. This enemy is called the old man, the old Adam; the earthly, carnal, natural man; the sin which is inherent, and dwelleth in us; the adjoining evil; the law of the members; the lusts of the flesh, which fight against the soul. As Satan is the father, so the flesh is mother of sin, which receiving Satan's temptations as it were into a fruitful womb, doth continue, nourish and bring forth sin.

Now as this is another of Satan's aids, so methinks I imagine the flesh bespeaking the soul in this or the like kind, What manner of communication is this which thou hast with mine enemy? Are godly thoughts suitable to dwell in me? or to sit down with me? Am not I thyself? conceived, and born, and brought up with thyself? and wilt thou now entertain an enemy, either to weaken or destroy me? I cannot endure any thought tending to the spiritual man; thou canst not but be sensible that we two cannot reign together and flourish together in the same soul at once. If the spirit live, I die, and if the spirit thrive I perish. And am I not nearer to thee, and dearer to thee than the spirit? Was not I with thee in the womb, and did I ever leave thee till this time? Have not I studied to please thee with all the delights, and incomes, and pleasures of this world? and wilt thou now turn thy back upon the old man, thy ancient acquaintance? See here a legion of lusts attending on thee; come, let us greet, and embrace, and throw out those pious thoughts that seem to disturb us in our dalliances. And thus we see how Satan assaults us by his aids.

S E C T. V.

Of the Duties that concern us, in respect of the immediate Assaults.

FOR the duties in our wrestling with Satan as to these assaults, let souls practise respectively. As,

1. To Satan's immediate assaults use these repulses.
1. Give entertainments to pious thoughts, hear what they say, what if they are strangers to thy unregenerate

heart (for so I may yet suppose thee) this hinders not but thou shouldst bid them welcome. It was the old law, 'love ye therefore the strangers, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt,' Deut. x. 19. And it is the apostle's charge, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares,' Heb. xiii. 2. Holy thoughts are precious things, and if not angels (strictly so called) yet are they God's messengers, and in that sense angels sent from God: They are the immediate fruits and buds of an immortal nature; they come from God, and they tend to God. They never come but for good, nor do they dwell any where, but in the issue they give exceeding great rewards. Why then cherish these motions of the Spirit, converse with them again and again; know the errand fully and thoroughly on which they come from heaven. Their meaning is to bring up thy soul from earth to heaven, and were it not pity to let them go before they have done the great business on which they come.

2. Complain of Satan's shutting the doors against such thoughts. Tell thy God that his enemy and thine hath got the possession of thy fancy and affections, and of all the outer rooms that lead into the privy chamber of thy heart, and that he hath put his barr and bolts so strongly in, that thou canst not open to those strangers. Yea, cry out against Satan and thyself, O the tyranny of Satan! and O the loathsomeness of my own heart, to entertain those holy thoughts! and if they stand at the door and offer their service, do not I join with Satan, and bid them begone? or if they step in before I am aware, am not I weary, and wilking with Satan to drive them out again? Why should I am not sufficient of myself, to think any thing as of myself, but my sufficiency is of thee, 2 Cor. iii. 5. If I endeavour never so much to wind up my soul to an holy meditation, presently I find my fancy or imagination, like the peggs of an instrument slip between my fingers as I am winding them up, and to fall down suddenly again. O woe is me that my nature is thus vile, and that Satan is thus strong in me! Come, Lord, and break open these doors, that thy messengers may come in, and find due welcome; all my sufficiency is of thee, and thou art God

all-sufficient. Why Lord if thou wilt thou canst throw out Satan, and make room for these harbingers and fore-runners of thy majesty.

3. Stand and startle at these wicked thoughts, that come instead of former good ones, is Satan so busy with thee, that now he hath filled thy heart with proud unclean or distrustful thoughts? doth he now suggest, That there is no God, that the world is for ever, that riches are better than grace, that the pleasures of sin are better than the hopes of heaven: Oh, shew thy abhorrence of them, and chide thy soul sharply for so much as holding any conference with them. But in this repulse begin betimes, crush them early at the very first rising, or Satan will prevail. It is not to tell what a world of misery man brings upon himself, by giving way to the first wicked thoughts: In the first place therefore, remember that text, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the ungodly man his thoughts,* Isa. lv. 7.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Duties that concern us in Respect of the Mediate Assaults.

TO Satan's mediate assaults by the world, or flesh, make use of these repulses. As,

1. To his assaults by the world, consider,

1. It is the Lord's command that we should have no intimate, endeared amity or correspondency with the world, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,' 1 John ii. 15:

2. God and the world are at such enmity that we cannot serve both. 'No man can serve two masters (that are opposite) for either he shall hate the one, and love the other, or else he shall lean to the one, and despise the other; ye cannot serve God and Mammon,' Mat. vi. 24. The apostle herein appeals to our consciences; 'Know ye not that the amity of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world, maketh himself an enemy of God,' James iv. 4. It is a reasoning question, Know ye not? worldly men do not so much out of ignorance, as out of heedlessness; they do not consider

consider: And what should they consider? That the amity of the world is enmity with God; and to please the world is to wage war against heaven. Oh, consider this ye that forget God!

3. In our baptism we renounce the world, with all the vain pomps and glorious vanities thereof; then we profess, that we would courageously fight against them under Christ; shall we cast aside the livery of Jesus Christ? shall we backslide from our religion in truth and power, and join league with the profest enemies of God and Christ? What is this but to be worse and more wicked in the latter end, than we were in the beginning? *For if after we have escaped the pollutions of this world, thro' the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse than the beginning.,* 2 Pet. ii. 20.

4. What is the world but changeable, variable, deceitful, miserable? Was there ever more experience of this truth than at this time? Oh what tumblings and tossings have been of late? How have men been deceived in their expectations and fruitions? Fair shews have been represented to some, as they were to Christ; when *the devil shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,* Mat. iv. 8. And how many have fallen down and worshipped? But are they not deceived? What matters the world's gorgeous shews? it is in touch a feather, in sight a shadow, in weight a smock, in trust a reed, in all deceitful. Achithophel for all his policy, Haman for all his sway, Goliath for all his strength, Nebuchadnezzar for all his pleasure; these worldlings that suck'd in the sweets of this world, they found its deceit, and now feel its punishment. Wicked world! how dost thou undo men with a world of treacheries? It hates them that love it, deceives them that trust it, afflicts them that serve it, reproaches them that honour it, damns them that follow it. Athanasius tells us of an hermit to whom God should reveal the state of this world, *Et omnia viscera, omnia aperta tenebris, et obfessa laqueis,* All hanged full of nets, and devils set by to watch them. Go you over the whole world, behold countries, view provinces, look into cities,
hearken

hearken at doors; see what is done in halls, in palaces, in private houses, are not the devil's snares in every corner? Justice is sold, shame is lost, truth is wrested, right despised; what lying, what slandering, what deceiving is there? the innocent are condemned; the guilty delivered; the wicked advanced, the virtuous oppress'd; pride, envy, perjury, vanity, these bear sway.

Ah! poor soul, doth the world interpose to hinder thy consideration, or thought of change? Doth it tell thee of riches, honours, pleasures? say then with Christ, *What if a man gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Or doth it tell thee of afflictions, persecutions, torments? say then with the apostle, *That the afflictions of this life are not worthy of the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Or if all this will not stop the mouth of the world, consider again, and consider of these particulars; the commands of Christ, the enmity betwixt the world and Christ, thy promise, and vow, and first obligation to Christ: Yea, consider of what the world is, either in itself or thyself, and then bid it begone; Away world, for it is written the time is short, —and the fashion of this world passeth away, 1 Cor. vii. 31.

2. To his assaults by the flesh, consider,

1. It is the Lord's command that we should depose the flesh. *Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof,* Rom. vi. 11. *And put off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts,* Eph. iv. 22. *And mortify your members which are upon earth, as fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence,* Col. iii. 5.

2. The flesh is a worse enemy than the devil himself. For never could the devil hurt us, if this inbred enemy did not betray us. This is the root, the fountain, the origin of all other sin, *when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.* Hence we say, that suggestion could do nothing without lust; if there were no fire in our wood, never could devils breath kindle any flame in our souls.

3. We are to weaken the flesh by abating the fuel of whatsoever may nourish and strengthen it. *Make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof,* Rom. xiii. 14.

As in a siege all means is used to stop the passages by which the enemy may be victualled, so must we stop the passages of sin by which the flesh is strengthened. Now as the flesh is resident in all parts and powers of the body and soul, so must we in every respect keep back provision from every part. From the body delicacy, drunkenness, wantonness; from the phantasy vain imaginations, pernicious errors; from the mind and will sinful cogitations, wicked deliberations; from the memory the remembrance of sinful pleasures, unless it be to repent of those that are past, and to flee from those that are present; from the heart unlawful lusts, wicked desires, unruly passions. I might thus instance in every part.

4. As we must weaken, so we must watch over the flesh; and the rather because tho' we should get the better in many conflicts, yet still it is plotting and practising new and fresh treasons. But what are those parts of the flesh we must especially watch? I answer,

1. The senses. These are the gates of our souls, and therefore they had need to be strongly guarded. *I made a covenant with my eyes, why then should I look upon a maid, Job xxxi. 1. And turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way, Psal. cxix. 36. And put a knife to thy mouth if thou be a man given to appetite, Prov. xxiii. 2. And I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue, Psal. xxxix. 1. And let not corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that may minister grace unto the hearers, Eph. iv. 29.*

2. The heart. This of all parts is the most subtil and crafty, *The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things, who can know it, Jer. xvii. 9. The counsel of the wise man is therefore good, Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life, Prov. iv. 23.* Indeed the heart is the chief monarch in this little world of man, which rules and commands all other parts; it is the guide and captain which leads and directs them in all their courses; it is as the *primum mobile* which moves all inferior spheres, or as the chief wheel in the clock which sets all the rest of the wheels a-going; it is the spring and fountain

outs of all our thoughts, words and actions, which being defiled, defileth them, or being purified, communicates its purity unto them. As the heart directeth, the tongue speaketh, the hand worketh, the eye seeth, the foot walketh; *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* Luke viii. 45

Alas! poor soul, doth the flesh interpose to hinder thy consideration or thoughts of change? Doth it tell thee of its nearness and dearness to thee, of its ancient acquaintance with thee even from the womb, of those many pleasures and incontinencies of delight it hath provided? Tell it again of its ill neighbourhood, of its ancient feud, by so much the worse, because more ancient; and for the pleasures and delights it speaks of, tell it, that such baits have hooks under them, the harlot's lips drop honey in the greeting, and wormwood in the parting. What is the end of such delights but death and damnation? *For if ye love after the flesh ye shall die,* Rom. viii. 1. and therefore say again, Oh why should I satisfy my flesh to endanger my soul? Or if these reasonings would not satisfy, consider seriously, and dwell upon these considerations, that God hath commanded thee to depose it; and that no enemy is so bad as that in thy bosom: That either thou must weaken it, and watch over it, or it will prevail and lead thee to the chambers of death; for *when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin being finished, bringeth forth death,* James i. 15.

Only one objection remains. Alas! saith the soul, I am unregenerate, and tho' I hear a voice behind me saying, This is the way, walk in it, Isa. xxx. 21. Yet do I want feet and strength to walk therein; these are good rules of wrestling against the devil, world and flesh, but I cannot sit, nor move, nor meditate: I am not sufficient of myself to think, how then should I follow these rules? You sing to a deaf man; you prescribe to a man dead in sins and trespasses.

I answer, Indeed I suppose no less; and yet if I speak

not to a man spiritual, I do to one rational; and as a more rational man, thou mayst fix thy thoughts on this or that object electively, which is a posture of soul, wherein the Lord may appear and affect thy heart. Come then, and peruse these directions, and reason thus, Why should I not do thus as I am directed? Heart, what hast thou to say, why thou shouldst not follow this counsel that is given thee? Again, it may be the Lord will come in, whilst thou art endeavouring after him. I will not say, that God is bound *ex congruo*, to give grace to thy endeavours. In all the word of God we find not one promise to any merely natural, or moral act of ours; yet as Mr. Ford observes, God hath seldom been observed, if ever, to fail any in their expectations of grace from him, doing in the way of means, what they by the power of nature can, and what the Spirit of God moves them unto. Hearken then to these rules, and obey. What if thy endeavours have no immediate influence upon grace, yet are a necessary way that God hath commanded every one to walk in, and they are as a means wherein God will dispense his grace to whom he pleaseth; so that whosoever doth wilfully neglect the use of such means, he cannot promise to himself any conversion; yea, he may certainly conclude God will not convert him. In all the directions which may be hereafter to the unregenerate, I wish this may be still remembered.

C H A P. III. S E C T. I.

Of the next Assaults that Satan makes against us.

IF in the first assault Satan be foiled, and the soul be resolved to go on, the holy Spirit usually comes in and works on the soul these several steps. As, 1. A sight of sin. 2. A sense of misery. 3. Sorrow for sin. 4. Seeking for comfort. 5. A sight of Christ. 6. Desire after Christ. 7. Relying on Christ. 8. Obedience to Christ. And accordingly Satan counter-works, and in every one of these steps assaults the soul either less or more, to keep it still in his hold. Oh he is loth to leave! and therefore at every step he meets the soul and wrestles with it. I shall (as the Lord enables) first observe his assaults, and then inform the soul of its several duties, in repelling of Satan respectively.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

Of Satan's Assaults upon fight of sin.

NO sooner hath the Holy Ghost opened the eye of the soul to see its sin, but presently Satan comes on with his fiery darts. Sometimes he makes sin little, Is it not a little one? And sometimes he makes sin great, Oh the greatness! and oh the numberousness of thy sins!

1. Sometimes he makes sins little, and herein he prevails with many souls. They are loth to bear the worst of themselves, and therefore Satan helps them with fig-leaves to cover their nakedness. What! is it not Satan's language that we hear in men? Surely our sins are not so great, we are not so bad, we have some good, we have some hopes if God be merciful, what matters it if we be sinful? Thus do men lisse and resist the first breathings of the Spirit of God. I believe, saith Shepherd, that all the powers of hell conspire together to blind men's eyes, and darken men's minds in the first work of Christ; *principis obsta*: It is the policy of Satan to stop Christ in his entrance, in his first stroke upon the soul. No wonder then if he put the wrong end of the prospective glass to the eye, that sin appears very little, if any thing at all.

2. Sometimes he makes sin great; he draws a charge at length, he takes up all the bloody aggravations he can think of; as partly in respect of the nature and quality of the sins themselves; and partly in respect of the circumstances: As being committed against knowlege at such a time, in such a place, and by such a person, as that God is thereby most dishonoured, his brethren most offended, &c. It is not to tell how the devil can stretch out sin upon the tenters of his temptations: Yea, of a small drop with the blast of his suggestions, he can make a great bubble; and which is most to be admired, he can in this charge present himself as an angel of light; he knows how to imitate those convictions of the holy Spirit, whose office it is to convince of sin, and therefore many a time in his aggravations of sin, he comes in God's name. He observes well enough how the squares go between God and the soul, and that the Spirit of God lays sin home, and close, *g. d.* Oh thou wretch, what hast thou done? What

sins are these that cry up to heaven against thee? So saith Satan, Oh thou damned wretch, what a life hast thou lived upon the earth! What gross, and grievous, and bloody, and crying sins standest thou guilty of?

S E C T. III.

Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.

THE duties in wrestling with Satan must be suitable to his temptations; and therefore,

1. To that temptation, that sin is but little, consider,

1. That no sin is so little but it is against a great God. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and have done this evil in thy sight.* Psal. li. 4. As all indictments in criminal pleas are filed against the king, his own crown and dignity; so are sins against God, a great God, be they in our esteem never so little.

2. No sin is so little but it deserves death and damnation. *The wages of sin is death,* Rom. vi. 13. the wages of every sin, whether little or great sin. Indeed great sins may have great punishments, but the stipend or desert of every sin is formally death, be it never so little.

3. Every sin, whether little or great, is a strong and soul-killing poison. We may know this by that first sin that ever the sun saw: No sooner was it committed, but presently it polluted mankind. All the sons and daughters of Adam that were ever since, or ever shall be to the world's end, have been, and will be infected by that very sin. And we find to this very day, that any little sin doated on impenitently, like a lump of leaven it soures all the soul, defiles the whole man, and every thing that proceeds from him. It doth not only unhallow his meat, drink, buying, selling, giving, lending, and other dealings in the world, but also turns all his spiritual services and duties, his praying, hearing, reading, meditating, &c. into abomination.

4. The less the sin, the greater folly to commit it. For what is it to sin, but to lay, as it were, in one scale of the balance, the glory of God, the blood of Christ, the joys of heaven, the loss of an immortal soul; and in the other, some rotten pleasure, earthly pelf, worldly preferment,

meat, fleshly lust, sensual vanity, and to suffer this to outweigh all those. If Christ could say, What is a man profited if he gains the whole world and lose his soul? How much more may I say, What profit is in this exchange, to lose a soul for a pin, a point, a trifle, a vanity; or confessedly for a small *punctilio peccadillo*, a very little sin? Speak no more of sin as little, if we prefer it before the great things of God, and Christ, and heaven, and souls of men. O prodigious madness!

2. To that temptation that sin is great, or as Cain cried, *My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven*, Gen. iv. 13. Consider,

1. The dew of grace hath ordinarily fallen upon most graceless souls. What if thy sins be great? Was it not the case of many a saint whose sins were forgiven? Hast thou been an idolater? so was Abraham: Hast thou been an adulterer? so was David: Hast thou been a blasphemer? so was Paul. What needs more instances? Poor soul, if thou couldst but peep into heaven, thou shouldst find there is Rahab the harlot, there is Manasseh the murderer, that made the streets of Jerusalem swim with blood; there is Mary Magdalene that had seven devils in her. A man or woman that hath many devils may come where there is not one; the devilish, hellish creature may thro' the mercy of God be partaker of heaven; lame and halt, and blind may come in there, and yet still there is room.

2. It is as easy with God to forgive the greatest sin upon repentance, as the least sin. 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief,' 1 Tim. i. 9. Tho' Paul was the greatest sinner in the world, yet God could, and did forgive him. What do thy sins cry up to heaven? yet is God's mercy above the heavens. Indeed God's mercy is infinite, for as God is an infinite God, so every mercy of God is as infinite as himself. His attributes and his essence are but one and the same; and therefore no wonder if it be all one with infinite mercy to forgive sins of the greatest size, as well as the least; thy sin is but the sin of a finite creature, but God's mercy is the mercy of an infinite Creator; thy greatest sins

are but the sins of a man, but the least of God's mercies is the mercy of God.

3. The Lord calleth all, even those sinners who are heavy laden with sins to come unto him, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, Matth. xi. 28. Is not this enough to rouse and raise up thy heart from sinking? Remember what was said to Bartimeus the blind man, sitting by the water side at Jericho, *Be of good comfort, arise, he calleth thee*, Mark x. 49. So cheer up thy heavy heart with this sweet balsam; lift up thy hands which hang down, and thy knees which are weak, and make straight steps with thy feet, even unto the throne of grace, *behold he calleth*. q. d. Poor soul, thou that complainest thy sin is great, come hither, and I will ease thee of it; let me bear thy cares, and thou shalt bear my comfort; give me thy sins, and I will give thee my righteousness. Heavy hearts whom this call of Christ cannot revive.

4. Thy sins indeed are great, and very great; and if ever the Holy Ghost do but open thine eyes, he will make thee see it: But yet they are not so great as that therefore they cannot be forgiven; that is not the voice of the Holy Spirit, but of him who is the father of lies: If thy sins were a thousand thousand times greater than they are, and if thou shouldst add to them the sins of Cain and Judas, and all the reprobates in the world, doubtless they would be a great heap, yet lay this huge heap before infinite pardoning grace, and there will be no comparison; what sayest thou? that God either cannot, or will not pardon thee? or that never such a sinner as thyself was pardoned? O do not limit the holy One of Israel! have no low thoughts of God's love, *which*, saith the apostle, *passeth all understanding*, Eph. iii. 19. Suppose the like sinner to thyself was never pardoned, 'Behold, saith the Lord, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth, shall ye not know it? I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert—to give drink to my people, my chosen: this people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.' It is the same with that promise, 'He will abundantly pardon, or he will multiply to pardon,' Isa. lv. 7. q. d. I'll drop mercy with your sin, and spend all I have

have rather than it should be said, My good is overcome of your evil.

But how may I know the false accusations of Satan from the convictions of God's own Spirit? for both tell me my sins are great, and very great. I answer, When they asperse God, and so charge the soul, that withal they reflect on God's goodness, and mercy, and love, and the riches of his grace, then are they not of the holy Spirit, but of the evil spirit. Oh mark this sign! if thy sins are so represented to thee, as exceeding the greatness of God's mercy, and thou criest with Cain, *My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven*, here the devil opens himself. Mr. Gurnal sweetly observes, The holy Spirit is Christ's spokesman to commend him to souls, and to woo sinners to embrace the grace of the gospel, and can such words drop from his sacred lips as should break the match, and sink Christ's esteem in the thoughts of the creature? You may easily know where this is minted, when you hear one commend another for a wise and a good man, but at last comes in with a *but* that dasheth all; you will think he is no friend to the man, but some sly enemy, that by seeming to commend, desires to disgrace the more. Thus when you find God represented to you as merciful, gracious, but not to such great sinners; to have power and strength, but not able to save such as you are, you may say, Avaunt Satan, thy speech bewrayeth thee.

S E C T. IV.

Of Satan's Assaults upon sense of Misery.

THE holy Spirit that convinceth of sin, in the next place works fear, or sense of misery. Thus Paul trembled, and the goaler trembled. As when a man sees danger near and imminent, he naturally fears; so when the Spirit presents a man's danger, death, and wrath even at the door, he begins then to fear, *Ye have not received*, saith the apostle, *the spirit of bondage again to fear*, Rom. viii. 15. this plainly intimates that once they had received it: The Spirit pursues souls whom he purposes for heaven with strong fears, till proud man falls down before God crying, and saying, Oh I am undone! Oh that I had never been born! &c. Now in this case Satan steps in, and

either

either allays these fears with worldly comforts, in some counterfeit claim, or else he works further and deeper fears than the Holy Ghost himself alone intended.

For the first; sometimes he allays these fears with worldly comforts, or some counterfeit claim. Of this I shall speak when I come to that other step of seeking for comfort. Satan hath his comforters, tho' the Lord knows they are miserable comforters all.

For the second; sometimes he aggravates fears, and to that purpose he tells men of God's eternal wrath, and of God's eternal rejection, and that God will never be merciful, and so he layeth them lower, and casts them into a further fear and bondage than the Holy Ghost is cause of: Yea, devils now combine and say as David's enemies said in his distress, What I would these souls escape our clutches! Come, let us now take them, for God hath forsaken them; let us now devour them, and swallow them up with fear and despair. As God says of those enemies of his church, *I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction*, Zech. i. 15. So when the Spirit works fear, in order to conversion, Satan watcheth his opportunity, and drives on that fear to utter despair.

It is a question how Satan can work this fear on the conscience, which is usually attributed to God's Spirit; but the answer is given by Dr. Goodwin in his *Child of Light*, thus,

1. That Satan cannot immediately wound the conscience; for as no creature can shed abroad God's love, and cause a poor soul to taste of the sweetness of it, so no creature can make impressions of God's wrath upon the conscience, but only God himself, or the Spirit of God immediately. But,

2. Satan can do it upon the conscience mediately, and that in these several respects.

1. When the Holy Ghost hath lash'd and whip'd the conscience, and made it tender, and fetch'd off the skin, then Satan can fret it more and more, and so be still rubbing upon the sore by his horrid suggestions and false fears cast in.

2. From renewing the remembrance of these terrors impressed

pressed by the Spirit, he can amaze the soul afresh with fear of worse.

3. He can bring home all the threatnings that are thundered forth in the word against hypocrites, and men unregenerate, and discharge them all with much violence and noise upon the poor doubting soul.

4. He can stir up the passions of fear, and grief, and trembling of spirit; he is the prince of the airy part of the little world in man, as well as of that elementary region in the great world, and so can raise unnatural storms and vapours that shall darken reason, and cause such thunder and lightnings, as shall burn all into a black confusion, such as if hell and soul would presently come together. And this he doth more than simply morally, *i. e.* by a bare propounding such objects as shall move them, (which men only can do) but further also physically; by stirring such humours in the body which such passions do set and stir in; and when he hath thus distempered and disordered all in a man and put a man to such dispositions of fears, then he comes with his suggestions, and speaks nothing but of wrath and terrors; and then looks as when a man's choler is up, every small thing provokes him, so now when his fear is excited, every suggestion, every surmise doth strike the soul thro' and thro' with horrid fears. And thus tho' not immediately, yet thro' the means of these mists, and vapours, and fogs raised, which environ and darken this sun, he works upon the conscience.

But what means Satan thus to fill the conscience with fears? I answer, His end is especially double. 1. To bring the soul to despair of eternal life. 2. To bring the body to some violent temporary death; in both which, if he can prevail, then he makes sure to hurry the whole man into the torments of hell. We may imagine him to bespeak the soul in his horrid hellish language, Wouldst thou now, vile wretch, turn unto God, hoping to be received to grace and mercy? why, assure thyself it is too late; are not thy sins in number numberless, and in their quality and nature most heinous and contagious? and hast thou not continued in this thy rebellion a long, a very long time? hath not Christ often called, and yet thou wouldst

wouldst not come? hath he not graciously offered and tendered himself to thee, but thou saidst he should not reign over thee? and hast thou not served me and obeyed me all the days of thy life? now therefore the day of salvation is gone, the acceptable time is past and never to be recalled; thou mayst with Esau seek repentance with tears, but thou shalt never find it no more than Esau did: Moreover, add the consideration of thy sins, the remembrance of God's justice, the terrible curse of the law, the fearful torments of hell prepared for sinners, amongst which number thou art one of the chief. Come do not flatter thyself with hope of mercy, but rather expect those fearful judgments, and endless torments which are due unto thee for thy rebellions.

Thus Satan labours to bring a poor sinner to deep despair, and to fill his conscience with horror and fear, which if he can accomplish, he rests not there, but like a cruel coward who can never be quiet till he see the death of his enemy, he then persuades to seek some ease of his present torments, by imbruing his hands in his own blood, and putting himself to some violent death. This is sad, yet some are brought to this, the Lord knows, I will instance in none but Cain and Judas, of whom the former desperately blasphemed the mercy of God, and the other desperately laid violent hands on himself, *He hanged himself, and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and his bowels gushed out*, Matth. xxvii. 5. Acts i. 18.

S E C T. V.

Of the Duties that concern Souls in this Case.

THE duties, or defeature, or soul's encounter in this case must be suitable to Satan's assaults: And therefore,

1. To that of despair: Consider, 1. As to sin. 2. As to God's justice. 3. As to the law. 4. As to hell.

1. As to sin, consider, that no sin, though never so great, should be a cause to move thee to despair. What would Satan persuade thee, because thou hast been so great and prodigious a sinner, therefore to despair? Retort this argument upon himself, and tell him that every thing by which he would persuade thee to despair, doth much more deter

deter thee from despairing: For tho' thy sin be great, yet this is the greatest of all other sins; other sins bind thee over to wrath, but this sin gives fire to the threatening, and sets the soul on flame with extreme horror; other sins wound the law, and the name of God thro' the sides of the law, but this sin wounds the gospel, in that it is not willing to have the wounds healed which former sins have made; other sins have wronged God the Father in trespassing against him, but this sin will not let Jesus Christ make satisfaction for the wrong that by sin is done to the Father; other sins reflect on the name, or power, or justice, or holiness of God, but this sin fights against all his lovely attributes of goodness, mercy, love and grace, and Satan claps his hands to see all the glorious attributes of God served alike, and divested of their honour; other sins, tho' great, are pardonable, if not mixed with this, but the least sin envenomed by this of despair, is wholly unpardonable. Hence we say that Judas sinned more, and more dishonoured God in despairing of his mercies, than in betraying of his Son; and Cain more grievously offended in saying, *My sin is greater than can be pardoned*, than by murdering his brother. O tremble at despair! for this sin draws nearer to the sin of devils, and is of the complexion of the damned souls in hell.

2. As to God's justice, consider, thou art not to look only on justice, but on justice and mercy, as meeting together, and kissing each other. These two are long since reconciled, so that now God knows how to be just, and yet to save thy soul. In that promise of God's betrothing himself to sinners, it runs thus, *I will betrothe thee to me in righteousness, in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies*, Hos. ii. 19. he will do it in justice and mercy, he will be righteous and gracious. If Satan object, Can the Lord be just and save such a sinner as thou art? Yes, mayst thou say, God tells me that he will marry me in righteousness as well as mercy; that is to say, he will do it in Christ, whose great undertaking was to bring justice to kiss mercy, that there might not be a dissenting attribute of God in marrying of me. In this case, as I would wish sinners have an eye on God's justice to keep them from presumption,

lumpsum, so likewise to have an eye on God's mercy to keep them from despair; or (which is all one) to think of Christ who hath already paid the price for the pardon of sin; and therefore as it were against mercy to damn, so it were against justice to exact the debt of them for whom Christ had paid it. What should we think of that man, who having a debt fully discharged by the Surety, should press upon the principal for payment of the same debt again? Surely it were a shameful dishonour to the righteous Judge of the world, to conceive, that having received in exact and full satisfaction for all thy sins by the hearty blood of his own dear Son, he should ever require them again at thy hands. If thou sayest, But hath Christ paid the debt for my sins? Yes, if thou wilt but accept of Christ on his own terms; come then poor soul, thou who art tossed with the waves of despair, think of justice interwoven with mercy; or if justice be it thou fearest, think of it as now thy friend in the Lord Jesus Christ; it is justice that acquits thee, if thou reliest on Christ, and who then shall condemn thee? who then shall lay any thing to thy charge?

3. As to the law, look not upon that exact obedience which the law requireth, for then Satan will attain his purpose; but get out of thyself, look upon Jesus, and reject thy own righteousness as altogether imperfect and insufficient. Alas! who can exactly live up to the law? the law requires of us things that we cannot do; the law accepts of nothing but absolute perfection in all that it requires; the law looks that things should be done in a right manner, out of a right principle, and to a right end; yea, that all should be done in the perfection of degrees, to the uttermost that is required: Now if souls pore on this, and look only on this, no wonder the devil tempt him either to looseness or despair; the way therefore is to go out of thyself, and to rely upon the alone righteousness and obedience of Jesus Christ, as being in itself all-sufficient for thy justification and salvation: Thou canst not perform the duties of obedience which the law requireth, but Christ hath done it, and God himself professeth that he is well pleased with him, and as contented with him and his obedience for thee, as if done by thyself. Surely this is gospel,

pel, the glad tidings: O what courage and comfort mayst thou take at this news!

4. As to hell, with which the devil frights thee: Meditate that hell is thy desert, but heaven is God's gift; and tho' Satan may hold thee over hell, yet he cannot turn thee into hell; if the Lord will save thee, not all the devils in hell can possibly damn thee: And is hell a place to be expected, or rather to be avoided? Tell Satan to his face, that thou wilt not willingly be his companion in torments, and therefore thou wilt not so far gratify him, nor be so cruel to thyself, as to be led by him into that grisly gulph of despair, which is the very next door to hell; no, no, thou wilt rather hope and wait on God in a way of contentedness to be at his disposal; say, If the Lord will have mercy on me, I shall live, or if the Lord will glorify his power and justice in condemning me, which I have deserved, I must die, only I will hope and wait, and be contented still to be at the Lord's disposal, and not at Satan's; and therefore against devils, be gone, I am of Paul's mind, we are troubled on every side, but not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair, 2 Cor. iv. 8.

Object. One objection here must be removed: The soul now in fear, or sense of misery, is advised for the avoiding of despair to look on justice as its friend in Christ, and to look on Christ as having paid the price for the pardon of its sin, and to rely on the obedience of Christ as all-sufficient for its salvation, and to hope, and wait, and to be content to be at God's disposal: Now how should the soul do thus that is in a state of nature? All these are the props and peculiar works of believers, and not of the unregenerate; what can they do to be saved? Or what can they do to resist Satan in order to conversion? I answer,

1. Men, tho' unregenerate, may yet be in the use of means, duties and ordinances; and if ever the Spirit comes into the hearts of people, it is usually this way: Nay, I shall say more, that besides the rational acts of meditation, application, &c. which are common to men, the Spirit of God doth always in a general, but sometimes in a special way draw out those acts, so as may be most for God's glory and our good. For example, it is in the power of nature

ture to go to church, and to hear the word; yet that I go at such a time, (it may be against my own inclination) and that I observe the word, and say it up, and meditate on it more than others, this is the Spirit's special influence, by way of gifts. for in all this there may be no grace neither.

2. The men I am speaking to, I do not look upon as wholly unregenerate, nor as yet regenerate, they are just as embryos in the womb before they have any perfect shape; neither are they as they were, nor as they must be, but imperfect creatures of God's Spirit, that will, if the womb miscarry not, be children of God. Now in this case I suppose thou mayst go farther than a mere natural man; as for instance, thou mayst hope, and if thy hope be not the grace of hope, yet grace may be seminally in it, and may first appear by it. Mr. Ford, a reverend divine, gives us the distinction of a gracious hope, and a rational or moral hope, whereby the soul comes up to a firm assent of this proposition, Tho' my case is sad, yet it is not desperate: Now altho' grace doth not always attend or accompany this hope, yet the Spirit of God doth use it, as it doth all other preparatory works, to dispose the soul for grace: Nay, saith my author, I know not, but if that the soul follow this moral hope, with a constant use of all means and ordinances, and in them resolve to cast himself upon Christ, to be saved by him in his own way: I say, I know not but this hope may be the immediate ground, if not the vehicle or chariot of the very first act of justifying faith; wherefore let this hope produce waiting, and let this hope and waiting in the use of means produce endeavours and resolutions to believe in Christ, and then to look on justice as thy friend in Christ, and to look on Christ as having paid the price for the pardon of thy sin, and to rely on the obedience of Christ as all-sufficient for thy salvation. This for the defeature of the first assault.

3. To that assault of self-murder, I almost tremble to name it, yet if Satan injects such thoughts, let the poor soul consider, this sin above other sins is against God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and thy neighbour, and thy own self.

1. Against

1. Against God, in breaking his pure and perfect law, *Thou shalt not kill*. If it be an horrible crying sin to kill another, if it stain the face of a whole kingdom with such a bloody brand, that it cannot be razed out but by the blood of him that shed it, Numb. xxxv. 33. surely it is much more execrable and villainous to kill a man's self, for not only God's law, but his majesty, crown and dignity are struck at by this sin.

2. Against Jesus Christ, for hath he not bought thee with his dearest heart-blood? Why then shouldst thou murder another man's servant? Hath he not invited thee to come in and close with him, and told thee that the union should be near, as near might be, betwixt thy soul and him: Why then shouldst thou offer violence, maiming, deformity, to his mystical body? If any sin be a crucifying of Christ, this must needs be one: Harken then to the voice of Christ from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus of Nazareth whose image thou defacest, and whom thou killest.

3. Against the holy Spirit, whose office it is to sanctify us, to dwell in us, to reveal unto us the mercies of God, the merits of Christ, the power of the word, the sweetness of the promises, to beget in us assurance, and hope, and affiance, and patience, and Christian fortitude: But that thou layest violent hands on thyself, contrary to all these holy operations, thou defilest thyself with thy own blood, thou ruinest the house and habitation of the Spirit, and thrusts him out of his lodging; thou tramplest upon the truth of all these glorious discoveries of the Spirit of grace, and for his promises of assurance, hope, patience, fortitude, thou neglectest and rejectest them all. Oh what a sin is this!

4. Against thy neighbour; for hereby the church is offended, the land is defiled, thy friends, kindred, wife, children, parents, are grieved and ashamed; yea, the very name, house, posterity, are stained and branded; or if all this be little in thy eyes, consider how the mouths of God's enemies are thereby opened, and the profession of religion is hereby vilified: Is it not usual for worldlings in this case to censure thy over-much studying of the scrip-

ture, hearing of the word, praying and meditating, and other duties, as if they were the causes that should bring thee unhappily to this fearful end? And is it a small matter to give occasion to wicked men to blaspheme God's truth, or to expose that religion which thou professest, to their slanders and calumniasions? Oh far be it from thee! Now the good Lord prevent this! Let it not be told in Gath, nor published in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, and of the uncircumcised triumph.

5. Against thy own self, by making thee guilty of a most horrible sin, and also obnoxious to most grievous punishments for sin: Self-murder is a mishapen monster, compounded of many sins: As, 1. Of hellish pride, which suffers thee not to stoop under God's afflicting hand. 1. Of impatiency, whereby thou murmurest and repinest against God's providences. 3. Of despair, whereby thou callest away all hopes of mercy, and miserably becomest thy own butcher and hangman: But oh the fearful plagues that follow after this sin! not only a temporary death, but immediately after death thou sendest thy soul bleeding to the dreadful tribunal of the ever living God, the most certain and sure revenger of all bloodshed; and what follows this but damnation? A sad business, to be so impatient of the heat of the sun, as for ease to leap into the fire of hell: I will not, I dare not judge thus of them, who thro' the abundance of melancholy are distracted of their wits, or who being terrified with Satan's temptations, do run headlong into this sin, not knowing what to do; but if thou art in thy right mind, and upon settled purpose, and willing choice, and serious deliberation, shalt murder thyself, that thou mayst be freed from some miseries, losses or disgraces which thou wilt not outlive, I profess to thee in the word of Christ, thy soul is in danger of hell-fire; and therefore thou hadst need to pray, Lord, lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil.

By this time we may discern the difference betwixt the holy Spirit, and the evil spirit's workings; both bring into, and keep souls under bondage, only the bondage of the holy Spirit is mitigated by the conjunction of hope,
and

and works towards a deliverance; but the bondage of Satan excludes all hope, or possibility in the soul's apprehension of ever being removed. Again, the bondage or fears of the holy Spirit are destituted for conversion, they are not penal only, but medicinal also; they are a sort of God's rods by which he brings men within the bonds of the covenant, and makes them to enquire what they shall do to be saved; but the bondage, fears and horrors which Satan sets home on souls, are merely for destruction, they are not medicinal, but only penal.

Object. Yes, but my spirit of bondage is hellish and desperate; sometimes I am apt to blaspheme the mercy of God as not able to pardon me, and out of desperate horror of spirit to chuse strangling, or any thing, that I might be put out of my present terrors, and know the worst of my condition: And is there, or can there be any thing of God's Spirit in such a dismal bondage as mine is?

This is Mr. Ford's objection, and I have known it the real objection of many a soul; but he answers, No doubt these fearful suggestions and injections proceed from the prince of darkness *emanative*, they are minted in hell, for they bear his image and superscription, but the Spirit of God hath an hand in them divers times, *dispositive*, by way of disposal and management; and that the poor soul may easily see, in that he hath not utterly left him to himself, but hath preserved him many a time from executing those horrid temptations, and gratifying Satan by self-destruction. Come then, and bear up poor soul, think with thyself, if the Spirit of God would have given thee over to Satan, why not sooner? And if he hath preserved thee hitherto, why may he not longer? Whilst thou livest under the means of grace, there is hope; he that is above ground is in sight of heaven: See and acknowledge the gracious conduct of the holy Spirit hitherto, and do not by too long adventuring to parley with Satan, drive the Holy Ghost from thee.

S E C T. VI.

Of Satan's Assaults upon sorrow for sin.

THE next work of the Spirit is *sorrow for sin*; it is God's promise, *I will take away the stony heart out of your*
E 2
flesh

flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. that is to say, a soft heart, a pliable heart; the Spirit of God works on the affections, and melts them into godly sorrow for sin, which is all one with an heart of flesh here promised.

Now herein Satan counter-works, and either keeps the heart as long as he can from mourning for sin, or if that will not be, then he labours might and main to keep the conscience continually on the rack: And I shall speak to both these.

1. Satan is exceedingly industrious to keep the heart resolutely stubborn and hard. Well he knows, that if once a poor soul bruised with the burden of sin, into tears of godly sorrow, and penitent softness, shall but fly into the bosom of Christ Jesus bleeding upon the cross, it will deprive him of all right and interest unto that soul for ever, and therefore he labours to keep it as long as he can from mourning for sin; yea, such a stirrer is he against true sorrow, that indeed most know not what it means; or if the heart begins to be wrought upon by the word, he raises all possible opposition against its yielding: And oh the loathsomeness of souls to leave Satan's service! Oh the withstanding of the word, ministry, motions of the Spirit, and all other means to lead souls out of hell into the glorious liberty of the sons of God! But above all, oh the hardness of mens hearts! Oh the difficulty of a minister's duty to prick a stony heart to the quick, to make a rock to weep and tremble! either must God bare his own arm, and put to his own strength, power and efficacy, or it will never be done.

2. And if indeed, God's merciful violence shall conquer souls, and they begin to melt kindly under sin, then Satan labours on the other side, that such may be swallowed up with over-much sorrow: Was not this the case of the incestuous Corinthian? No question the sentence of excommunication, and his delivering up to Satan, wrought deeply upon him, so that Paul was fain to write in his second epistle, that they should release him of his censure, receive him into the church, and minister a word of comfort to him, *lest he were swallowed up with over-much sorrow*,

2 Cor. ii. 7. This is another of Satan's depths; when godly sorrow is once on foot in an afflicted soul, very prone it is to feed still on tears: When the flood-gates of the heart are but once opened, it is Satan's desire that they should run for ever; and in this case what ado is there, and what a hard matter it is to be persuaded of God's mercy and to apply the promises: Oh how the devil interposes with all his cruel policy, and cursed contradiction! He then objects, and urges to the utmost, heinousness of our sins, the littleness of our sorrow, together with the great disproportion betwixt our heinous sins and little sorrow, the number of our sins, and fewness of our tears.

S E C T. VII.

Of the Duties that concern us in this Respect.

THE duties of wrestling must still be suitable to Satan's assaults. So then,

1. To that assault of keeping the heart from mourning for sin. Consider,

1. Thy heart hath been the fountain whence all the filthy thoughts, raging passions, wicked purposes, rotten speeches, rebellious actions have sprung and issued out, then great reason hast thou to make that heart of thine a fountain of godly sorrow, of penitent tears, of mourning and lamenting, of bleeding, and bewailing over all thy sins.

2. If Christ Jesus open a fountain of his own dear warm heart's blood for sins and for uncleanness; surely thou art a cursed wretch, and cruel enemy to thy soul's comfort, if thou dost not endeavour to keep open in thy heart a counter-wall, as it were, of weeping over him whom thou hast pierced, and for those sins which have put the Son of God to death? What? shall the precious heart of God's own Son fall asunder in his breast, like drops of water for thy sins? And shall not thy sinful heart groan and sigh at all? shall it not mourn and melt for the infinite abominations of thine own heart and life?

3. If that heart of thine be not wounded, by the ministry of the word; while it is called to day, it will and must hereafter be filled with that horror which would burst a thousand hearts to think upon it. This was Christ's threat,

We be unto you that laugh now, for ye shall weep and waepe, Luke vi. 25. There is a weeping of despair in hell; *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,* Mat. xxii. 13. Either therefore now make thy heart the subject of godly sorrow, or as sure as thy heart is in thy body, it will hereafter become the object upon which the fierce wrath of God, and fiercest torments in hell shall be exercised and executed with extremity and everlastingness.

4. In case of outward troubles, as losses, crosses, disgraces, death of friends, or the like, thou canst take on extremely; and is not sin more grievous than any of these? If all outward miseries require one tear, the least sin of the soul may justly challenge a whole torrent; if the death of thy friend, or of thy son deserve a sigh, well may the death of thy soul challenge the last drop of thy dearest heart blood.

5. A truly broken heart gets a title, right and interest to all the purchases of Christ's passion, all the promises of life, and all the pleasures in heaven; yea, in this way thou shalt bring down the great majesty of heaven, to dwell in thy heart, as in a royal throne, chair of estate, and seat of eternity. 'Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirits of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones,' Isa. lvii. 25.

6. God hath appointed especial sovereign means for the softning of hearts: If thou sayest, what sovereign means? I answer,

1. The word; 'Is not my word like a fire, saith God, and like an hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?' Jer. xxiii. 20. An hammer it is that breaks and thus doth the law break our hearts, by shewing us the terrors thereof; a fire it is that melts, and thus doth the gospel melt our hearts, by revealing to us the mercy of God in Christ; Oh, will a soul say, Hath the great God in heaven and earth sent Christ into the world for me? hath he left angels [now devils] and many thousands of men to chase me? whose heart will not melt that is warmed with this love of God?

2. Prayer;

2. Prayer; and to that purpose we have his wishes and promises, which we may turn into prayer; O go to God, and put him in remembrance of that which he hath desired in his word, *O that this people had such hearts, as would fear me and keep my commandments always*, Deut. v. 29. Say unto the Lord, it is as easie with him to create such an heart in thee as to wish thou hadst such an heart. Put the Lord in mind of his promise, *I will take away their stony hearts, and I will give them hearts of flesh*, Ezek. xi. 19. Entreat him for the Lord's sake to make good this word to thee, cry to him, Come Lord and break this hard heart of mine, prick it, and launce it, and rather than I perish, let thy holy Spirit be a spirit of bondage to it, that I may be afflicted, and mourn, and weep for my sins.

3. To that assault of swallowing up thy heart with over-much sorrow, this is more usual with God's people; many a soul hath many a time complained, No heart so hard as mine, my sins are above ordinary, of a scarlet crimson dye, and my sorrow is very poor and scant, in no proportion to my great and grievous provocations, and therefore as yet I cannot, dare not, will not meddle with any mercy, apply any promise, or be persuaded that Jesus Christ belongs unto me. Oh that any should wilfully lye upon the rack of terror, and trouble of mind! Oh that any should lay himself thus open to Satan's horrible injections, and cruel temptations! away, away with all exceptions, pretexts, scruples, standings out to receive Jesus Christ. And consider,

1. It is not the greatness of thy sorrow but the truth of thy sorrow for sin, as sin, that God expects. The devil tells thee of thy great sin, and little sorrow, and of the poor proportion betwixt these two; and the truth is, if an exact proportion of sorrow to the inherent nature and demerit of sin be looked at, there is none such to be found. Alas! what proportion is there betwixt finite and infinite? Thy sorrow is finite, but thy least sin being against an infinite God is therefore infinite. And suppose thy sorrow were infinite as thy sin, yet according to the tenor of the first covenant it would not be acceptable, because there is

no clause in the covenant to give any hope of repentance; look therefore at the truth and sincerity of thy sorrow, for this is the proportion of the gospel; heart-sorrow is gospel sorrow. When the Jews were pricked in their hearts then Peter like a good chirurgeon, would not keep those bleeding patients any longer in pain with their wounds open, but presently he clapt on the healing plaister of the gospel. Believe on the Lord Jesus, Acts iii. 37. Weeping soul, doth thy heart, when thou art in secret weeping for thy sin, condemn thee? or doth it clear thee? if thy heart be false I cannot help thee, no nor the gospel neither; but if thy heart be sincere, then be of good comfort, for certainly thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

2. Jesus Christ calls thee, is not that his voice *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you*, Mat. xi. 28. Wade on a little with me in the unfolding of this so comfortable a call, and be revived. First then here is to be considered, who calleth. Secondly whom he calleth. Thirdly why he calleth. Every of these contains in it wine of comfort, and oil of grace to gladden the heart, and to chear up the heavy countenance of the sorrowful and sobbing soul.

1. Consider who calleth; Is it not the woman's seed appointed to crush and bruise the serpent's head? Is it not that root of Jesse, that son of David, that sweet Emanuel, that meek Messias, that merciful Jesus, that sole and only Mediator, who in his own person hath concluded a peace, and made a full atonement between the Lord and thee? Is it not that Jesus Christ shadowed in the law, foretold by the prophets, and in the appointed time exhibited? surely he it is, and none but he: Thou sayest thou art a sinner, a grievous sinner, and he tells thee, *His name is Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins*, Matth. i. 21. Oh! if souls would believe this, would not this dry up their tears? Thou sayest, thou seest him not, but thou hast his word, and he is real in what he speaketh. Suppose then, that in the chamber where thou art crying after him, or in the church where thou art waiting for him, he should appear, and visibly appear before thine eyes opening his bosom, and bowels, and blood before thee, and calling

calling unto thee to this purpose, I entreat thee, and beseech thee, by all those tears I have shed for thee in the days of my flesh, by all those bitter agonies I have suffered for thee, by all those tender bowels which have been rolled together towards thee, come to me, embrace me, and lay thy weary waltering soul in this blessed bosom of mine. Who would not come in? Who would not rise out of the dust, and with chearful spirit embrace the motion of his dear Redeemer? Why he it is that calleth thee.

2. Consider whom he calleth: Is it not these who are weary and heavy laden? Is it not those who are tired and overburthened with the weight of sin? Christ, and all gospel promises belong to them that mourn in Zion; *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, saith Christ, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted.*—*O thou afflicted, and tossed with tempests, that hast no comfort, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires,*

Eccl. Luke iv. 18. Isa. liv. 11: The spiritual excellency of such a soul is declared by a similitude of a goodly, costly, stately structure, which the Lord would build for himself.

‘Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble contrite spirit, to revive the spirits of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones,’ Isa. lvii. 15. He that hath

heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool, hath yet another throne on earth, even in the hearts of humble contrite sinners, ‘They that sow in tears shall reap in joy:

‘he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him,’ Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. As sure as harvest

follows seed-time, will comfort follow mourning; for therefore Christ calls, that he may wipe away all tears from such as weep for sin. Indeed sorrow for sin gives not the soul an interest in Christ as any cause; in strict speaking there is no other condition in the covenant of grace, but only believing in Christ; yet because no man will come to a Saviour, but he must know what need he hath of a Saviour; therefore we must be first convinced of

sin,

sin, and must be sensible of sin; they only will attend on Christ's call, who feel sin a burden; as if a man be under an heavy burden in some dark night, and hears but the noise of the feet of one passing by, then he cries out for help; so the soul under the heavy burden of sin, is glad to hear of any direction out of the word of God to come to Christ, and therefore Christ only calls them who are thus qualified; *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.*

3. Consider why, or to what end he calleth: Is it not to take possession of Christ and all his graces? Is it not to come to a near, and sweet, and everlasting fellowship with Christ himself? Is it not to have his person, and to have his privileges, rest, and peace, and reconciliation with his majesty? If Christ should say to thee, Come into the garden, and there watch and pray with me, sorrow and suffer with me; wouldst thou not count it an honour? What is it then to say, Come and have rest; come and I will ease thee of thy burden of sin; come and I will sprinkle thy conscience with my blood, that thou shalt be able to give answer to all the temptations of Satan; thou shalt have thy pardon now, and at the great day of judgement thy pardon shall be solemnized by men and angels. Ah! poor soul, why weepest thou? Is it not time to wipe thine eyes with Mary, and to say Rabboni? Surely if God gives thee but a heart to make this real to thy soul, thou mayst depart in peace, and go away and bless thy God, and say with the Psalmist, 'O now my soul return unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt very bountifully with thee,' Psal. xi. 6. 7.

If yet thou sayest, When is my sorrow sufficient? and when may I receive comfort in due season? I answer,

1. When the soul is weary of its bonds and fetters of sin, as much, and more than of the fetters of trouble; when the chains of corruption are grievous as pangs of consciences; when the soul hates Satan as a tempter, as much as a troubler, then it is ripe for comfort; but when the cry is louder, Oh my sorrow! and oh my grief! then, Oh my sin! and oh my guilt! When it follows God, and
means

means with, Oh give me comfort! but never with, Oh give me grace! this soul is not ripe for comfort.

2. When the soul is contented, if God see it fit and needful for the soul to be longer without comfort; when the soul can pray in sincerity, Lord, if my rotten heart be not broken enough, break it more; if my searched wounds be not thoroughly searched, launce them, and search them more; if there be any wickedness in me, search me Lord, and try me till thou find it out; if I would be proud of thy favour, or if I would turn thy grace into wantonness, or get above ordinances and duties of religion, or proudly despise my brethren that are lower than I, let me fast longer from comfort. Here is a soul (if any) that is ripe for comfort; but till a man come to this frame, it is a sign he is not truly broken, and therefore comfort to such an one would be like raw meat, that would never digest with him, the Lord hath not yet gotten the mastery over his will, and therefore no wonder if he lay more irons yet upon him.

S E C T. VIII.

Of Satan's Assaults for seeking of Comfort.

THE soul sorrowing for sin is now commanded to seek for comfort, and to that purpose it is the Lord's message to his ministers, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned,' Isa. xl. 1. Satan knowing this, and perceiving the soul's disposition to enquire after this, coins comforts of his own devisings, and presents them to the soul, *q. d.* Come soul, will nothing serve but comfort? Is this thy voice, Some crumbs of comfort to a poor languishing soul? O make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which God hath broken may rejoice! why then thou shalt have comfort; lo at the door stands waiting for thee thy old companions, join but with them, and they will drive away these dumps and melancholy fits: Dost thou not hear them say, 'Come on, let us enjoy the good things that are present, let us speedily use the creatures as in youth, let us fill ourselves with costly wines and ointments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us; let

‘let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they be
 ‘withered, let none of us go without his part of our vo-
 ‘luptuousness, let us leave tokens of joyfulness in every
 ‘place, for this is our portion, and our lot is this,’ Wis.
 ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. Or if thou sayest all these are carnal, and
 thy sorrow is spiritual, and there is no proportion betwixt
 these two; why then, saith Satan, go to the word and pray-
 er, and other means, ‘Kindle a fire and compass thyself
 ‘about with sparks, and then walk in the light of thy fire,
 ‘and in the sparks which thou hast kindled,’ Isa. l. 11.
 Go thy ways to duties, and rest in duties, and never talk
 more of a principle of grace, or of love to God, fetch’d
 from Christ Jesus as the spring of all. Thus Satan tempts,
 this is his method and malice in this case, he plots first to
 allay and take away the smart which God hath made, by
 outward mirth: But if he finds the soul bleeds still, and
 will not be stench’d, but only by the blood of Christ, and
 that is it which it is busily enquiring after, then by way
 of diversion he bids such pray, and hear, and confer, and
 joy in them, and rest in them. He cares not where they
 have comfort, so it be on this side Jesus Christ; well he
 knows, that a reaching out of the soul towards the merci-
 ful hand of Christ holden out to help it up in the next and
 immediate act, by which a man is quite and for ever pul-
 led out of Satan’s power, and put into the paradise of grace;
 and therefore here now he bestirs himself, and to the soul
 that cries after ease and comfort, he offers comforts of these
 several sorts, carnal and spiritual outward mirths, and rest-
 ing on means of grace.

S E C T. IX.

Of the Soul’s Wrestling with Satan as to these Assaults.

TO these two assaults you must use suitable repulses.
 To the first then of wicked companions and their
 temptations, consider of these particulars:

1. It is not so much a companion, a friend, a loose com-
 pany of men, as the devil in and by them, that tempts thee
 to carnal comforts. When Christ began to shew to his
 disciples, how that he must go into Jerusalem and suffer
 many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes;
 then Peter took him aside, and would needs comfort him
 with,

with, 'Be it far from thee Lord, this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me, thou savourest not the things of God, but those that be of men,' Mat. xvi. 21, 22, 23, 24. Peter in his dissuasion was an instrument of Satan, and set on work by Satan, and therefore Christ calls him Satan; no less are they that bring carnal comforts to spiritual sores.

2. In seeking comfort, it is no way of God, to advise with carnal and unregenerate friends. Alas! they think thou art mad, they know not what trouble for sin means, why then should thou discover thy disease to such who are no physicians: When God wrought wonderfully from heaven, in the conversion of Paul, it is said, that *he obeyed God immediately, and never consulted with flesh and blood*, Gal. i. 16. Thus do thou. Doth God by his ministry convince thee of thy sinful ways, of becoming a new man, of coming to him for ease and refreshment? Give up thyself to this call immediately, and consult not with flesh and blood.

3. There is no suitableness of what they offer to the healing of thy sorrowful and sin-sick soul. What idle companions can quiet thy conscience, forgive thy sin, support thy spirit, or fill thee with spiritual joy? Alas! all their joys are but as the crackling of thorns under a pot; 'Vanity, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad, and of joy, what doth it?' Eccl. ii. 1, 2. There is no more agreement betwixt carnal mirth and a spiritual fore, than betwixt light and darkness. Away then, 'Depart from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest thou shalt be consumed in all their sins,' Numb. xvi. 26.

4. It was the apostle's advice to them, who upon the prick of the heart enquired for cure, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. And this he did very earnestly, for with many words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from them, Acts ii. 40. He insisted much on it, and seriously charged, adjured, and intreated them, as knowing it to be a business of very great importance in what company such young beginners lighted; Surely this

concerns

concerns thee as much as him. Oh that when such temptations are abroad, thou wouldst think as if thou heardst that question put to thee, Why seek ye the living among the dead? Luke xxiv. 5. What living lasting joys can be found with them that are dead in sin? Oh save thyself from them!

To the second assault of going to duties, and resting on duties for ease and comfort. Consider,

1. This is a seeking for righteousness, as it were, by the words of the law, not directly, but as it were, it sets up one thing for another; 'Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, we establish our own righteousness, and are not subject to the righteousness of God,' Rom. ix. 31. and x. 3.

3. Duties may pacify conscience for a time, but certainly it will not hold. 'Then Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb, yet could they not heal him, nor cure him of his wound,' Hos. v. 13. It is natural to men to rest on duties, so it was at first, Adam and all his posterity was to be saved by doing; *Do this and live*: And hence all to this day seek in like manner to be saved by doing; but if this were sufficient, what need of a Saviour? If we rest on duties, or any thing this side Christ, we shall find them as weak as the Assyrian, or as Jareb, they cannot heal us, they cannot cure us of our wounds.

4. Duties must be used, but carnally applauded and gloried in, they will undo souls. Duties are to Satan as the ark of God was to the Philistines: He trembled to see a soul diligent in the use of duties, but when the creature confides in them, and rests on them, he hath his design. This was Bernard's temptation, when being assisted in duty, he could stroke his own head with *Bene fecisti Bernardus*, O Bernard, this was gallantly done, now cheer up thyself. Many a poor soul would have comfort, and know not whither to go for it but to prayer, hearing, reading, &c. and that done, he goes away and strokes himself, Surely I shall do well now, I shall be able to wrestle with devils. This is the very way to miscarry. One speaks it out boldly, but truly, Many souls do not only perish praying

ing and repenting, but they perish by their praying and carnally trust, and comfort themselves. I desire to be rightly understood in this point, if they must rely on duties, let go their duty, for their comfort ought to be all in Christ. Do not imagine a Christ talked of, and not desired, or a duty, or prayed to, will solidly comfort. Beware of Satan's deceit either way! What, is thy duty and seeks to be comforted? Go to Christ, but not in a way of duty, not resting on the duty, but only on him; hear a sermon to bring thee to Christ, fast and pray, and get a full tide of affections in them to carry thee to the Lord Jesus Christ; in this doing, Satan will vanish and depart from thee, at least for a season, as he did from Christ, the Captain of thy soul's salvation.

S E C T. X.

Of Satan's Assaults upon the sight of Sin.

THE soul now understanding that there is no solid, suitable comfort on this side Christ, begins therefore to look out for Christ, Hol. vi. 1, 2, 3. 'Come, say converts, let us return unto the Lord, for he hath broken us; and he will heal us; he hath smitten us, and he will bind us up: After two days he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight; then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord, his going forth is prepared as the morning, and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.' Well, saith Satan, if it be thus, if nothing but Jesus Christ will serve the turn, if a sight of Christ be the next thing looked for, then take a view of Christ in his beauties, graces, sweetnesses; acquaint thyself with the history of Christ from first to last; learn him in his natures, person, incarnation, offices, endowments; for his nature, he is God and man, [*Theanthropos*] God manifested in the flesh; for his person, he is the second person in the Trinity, in which person both the natures are united; for his incarnation, he was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary; for his office, he is a king, a priest, and a prophet; and for his endowments, he received the Spirit without measure, in him are hid

hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, in which respect he is said to be fairer than all the children of men. Why all this, saith Satan, I am willing thou shouldst learn, study and gain as much of the speculative, notional knowledge of Christ as possible thou canst; launch out (if thou wilt) into the deep questions and controversies of three persons in one nature, and of two natures in one person: Consult all schoolmen in their hot disputes and new opinions, there thou mayst hear enough of the sound of his name. Oh the temptations of Satan when he hears sinners complain! What, no remedy for a sin-sick soul? is there no balm in Gilead, no physician there? And when the answer is given no, there is no other name under heaven, whereby possibly thou canst be saved, but only Jesus Christ. Why then, let me see Christ, saith the soul, give me a view of Jesus, or I die, I am undone, I perish everlastingly. Hereupon steps in Satan, saying, Come, thou shalt have a view of Christ, I am no enemy to a general, notional, historical, speculative knowledge of Jesus Christ, only content thyself with Christ as an object of knowledge, and not of faith. And thus Satan deals with souls, as we do with surveyors of lands, that take an exact compass of our grounds or lands, of which they shall never enjoy a foot; and many are taken in this snare: There is much talking of Christ, many luxuriate into a theoretical knowledge, a meer brain knowledge of Christ, that have no right or title to Christ, nor ever look after it; and so they miscarry.

S E C T. XI.

Of the Soul's Wrestling with Satan as to this Assault.

TO this assault you must use these repulses,

1. Labour so to know Christ, as to have your hearts taken up with the practical admiration of the glory of Christ above all the glories in the world, that is true knowledge which stirs up affections in the heart, and the effects thereof in your life; and the first affection that is stirred up in the hearts of men at the sight of Christ, it is a wondering and admiring at the glories, splendors, and excellencies that are in Christ, 1st. ix. 6. *His name shall*

be called wonderful. You have seen many wonders abroad, you have seen the heavens and the earth, at which you many times wonder; but when God darts light into your spirits, to cause you to see the beauties of Jesus Christ, all other wonders will cease, and give way to this great wonder. As the stars, tho' they be glorious creatures in themselves, yet when the sun arises, all their glory is eclipsed; so tho' God hath many wonders in the world, yet when the Sun of righteousness riseth, all other works of God are darkned with the glory of him; certainly that soul knows not God nor Christ savingly, that knows him not practically as the wonder of the world, and so cries out, Oh the height, and depth, and breadth, and length of the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

2. Labour so to know Christ, as to have a practical and experimental knowlege of Christ in his influences, and not merely a notional. Alas! Christ is but a meer notion and imagination to most people in the world; how few know Jesus Christ by way of influence, power, and fellowship with him? It is said of them that fear his name, that Christ the Sun of righteousness will arise with healing in his wings, and they shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall, Mal. iv. 2. This clears it up, that as the sun by an influence into the earth doth quicken and enliven the earth, and makes all the seeds and roots hidden in the earth to revive, and put themselves forth to sprout and flourish; so there is an influence going forth from the Sun of righteousness unto the souls of men, to make them of dead to become living, and of barren to become fruitful; and this is called the power of Christ, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, Phil. iii. 10. *i. e.* That I may know Christ, and be made partaker of the good things flowing from Christ, this is the voice of one who would savingly know Christ, Oh that I may know him as a prophet instructing me, as a priest sanctifying me, and as a king reigning (spiritually in me! Oh that I may know the power of his resurrection in the vivification of my soul, in the abolition of my sin, in the acquisition of righteousness, and in the restoring of me to the assured hope of future glory! The devil is no great enemy to an historical know-

lege of the prophetical, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ, or of the resurrection of Christ, of which Paul speaks synecdochically; but to the holy virtue and power, which comes from Christ in any of these particulars, he is a deadly enemy: It is your duty therefore so to know Christ, as that you may feel the heavenly influences of whatsoever you know of Christ: For instance, it is one part of the cry, O that I may know Christ as a prophet instructing me! How is that? Why, Christ in his prophetic office teacheth the heart concerning himself, which none can do but only Christ Jesus. I will not deny but men or angels may present truths, and convince the understanding, but they cannot so make known a truth as to gain the heart by it, or to transform the heart into the very image of that truth; only Jesus Christ in the administration of the prophetic office teaches and prevails with the heart when he comes with truths. We see many people come to sermons, and there Christ is opened clearly and distinctly, and thereupon they get some notional, speculative brain-knowledge of Jesus Christ, but they are not changed, their hearts are not over-powered. At another time the same persons may come to a sermon, when Christ is named only by the by, and then their hearts are mightily wrought upon, and they go away saying, Verily God is in this place; why now, Christ speaks to the heart, and before man speaks only to the ear. 2. It is another part of the cry, Oh that I may know the power of the resurrection of Christ! How is that? Why, there is a virtue flowing from the resurrection of Christ from the grave, to the resurrection of the souls of men from the death of sin. *As Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 4.* And this influence of Christ is called *the exceeding greatness of his power*, Eph. i. 19. It is exceeding great power that by the resurrection of Christ, an holy and gracious change should be wrought in the souls of men, from death to life, from bondage to liberty, from uncleanness to holiness, and from the power of Satan unto God. Oh that thus you would labour to know Christ in a powerful, practical, and experimental knowledge.

3. Labour

3. Labour so to know Christ, as to make him the object of your faith, and not merely as the object of your knowledge: Many study Christ, but herein they only act as students, and not as believers: Oh be acquainted with this mystery of grace! the very setting of Christ before the soul as the full object of justifying faith, hath a mighty power to draw our faith upon Jesus Christ; as the setting a temptation before a man, hath a power to draw out his corruptions, so the setting of Christ in his glory and excellency, in his active and passive obedience, in what he is, and what he came into the world for, as an object of faith, it hath a mighty power both to draw out faith where it is, and to cause or procure faith where it is not: Christ is not only an object for you to work upon when you have faith, but such an object, as being set before the soul, hath a quickning power to cause faith; it may be your complaint, Christ is a glorious object indeed, he is the chiefest among ten thousand; but alas! I am dead in sin, and I want a faculty to see him savingly in all his glories. Why now set Christ before you as the object of faith, and sooner or later, if you belong to him, you will feel his influences: He is not only an object of faith for the soul to work upon, when it can see, but such an object, as the very setting of it before the soul, hath a quickning power to work life in the soul, to cause the eye to see him, and to cause the heart to make after him, though it were never so dead.

4. Labour so to know Christ as he is your righteousness, both to expiate former iniquities, and to yield obedience to the law for your justification. This is the Spirit's second conviction of all whom he purpoeth for salvation. *First*, He convinceth them of sin, and, *2dly*, He convinceth them of righteousness; but of what, or whose righteousness? surely not of their own. Alas! souls in this case usually look upon themselves first as sinners obnoxious to the law of God, and the curse thereof, and therefore never able to expiate sin: *2dly*, As creatures made to a supernatural end; and therefore bound to answer the whole mind of God in the obedience required at their hands; now it being discovered to them, that both

these are beyond the compass of their own endeavours, there is no other way, but to look to Christ Jesus as their righteousness, the spirit therefore convinceth them of Christ his righteousness: And indeed it is Christ, and only Christ, who first expiates former iniquities, he satisfies for sin, and procures the remission of sins, *In his blood we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*, Eph. i. 7. And, 2dly, He fulfils all righteousness, he performs all the obedience which justly may be required of us; 'For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life,' Rom. v. 10. His death reconciles us, and his life saves us; his passive obedience, and the actual obedience which he yielded to the whole law of God, is that righteousness whereby we are reconciled and saved. Oh. that you would labour to know Christ thus; as he is God your righteousness, and so act your faith on him.

S E C T. XII.

Of Satan's Assaults upon Desires after Christ.

THE Holy Ghost having brought on the soul thus far, in the next place begins to breed in the heart some desires after Christ; and indeed how should it be otherwise? The frequent discourses of Christ, and of the mercies of God in Christ to poor sinners, are so suitable and savoury, that the soul begins to taste some sweetness in hearing them, and this sweetness stirs up some passionate desire; Oh that Christ were mine! Oh that I had my share in the passion and purity of the Lord Jesus Christ! Oh I thirst, I faint, I languish, I long for one drop of mercy; as the hart panteth for the water brooks, so my soul panteth after thee, my Lord, and my God: Oh that my poor trembling soul were now received into the blessed bleeding arms of Jesus Christ!

Satan that hears this, understands well enough that now the soul is not far from the kingdom of God, it is even upon the quickning, and therefore he plies this season, therefore he bestirs himself with all the policy and power of hell to cause it miscarry; *q. d.* Come my angels, come devils, and bestir yourselves, it may be those desires are only

Only flashy, it may be these pantings are nothing but a pang: Have not the desires of many been like lightning, soon in and soon out, too violent to hold? Or like the wind, which how strongly soever it seem to blow one way at present, yet soon after it is found in the quite contrary point: A man may be drunk with passion and affection as really as with wine; and as it is ordinary for a man to make a bargain when he is in his cups, which he repents of so soon as he is sober again, so it is ordinary for sinners, who make choice of Christ and his ways in a sermon (while their affections have been elevated above their ordinary pitch by some moving discourse) to repent of all they have done a while after: How many have come from a sermon with a full gale of desires, but when the impression of the word, which heated their affections, was but once worn off, when they came to themselves again, and were as far from any such desires after Christ, as ever they were before? Sudden desires seldom ripen into a deliberate choice; rash and hasty wishes do but seldom settle into a permanent resolution to renounce sin and self, and to cast the soul wholly on Jesus Christ: Come then and blow on these desires, blast them in the bud, that they may never bear fruit, nor come to maturity of faith. Thus Satan calls on his legions, and they arm themselves against the soul, now panting and breathing after Christ.

S E C T. XIII.

Of the Soul's wrestling with Satan, as to this Assault.

THE duties therefore that now concern you, are these:

I. Content not yourselves with some sudden pangs of affection, but labour to preserve those impressions, which the Spirit at any time makes on your souls. This is the caveat of the apostle, Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, or run out as leaking vessels. It may be at present your desires are strong, earnest, eager, vehement, extreme thirsting, as the parched earth, for refreshing showers, or as the hunted hart for the water-brooks; surely this is well, and herein you disfigure your desires, from lazy, cold, heartless, indiffer-

ent desires: But oh take heed now lest this prove but as the early dew, none of which is to be seen at noon.

Quest. But what should I do to preserve these impressions?

I answer; 1. If thou hast got this heat in a sermon, or any other public ordinances, betake thyself to thy closet, and there labour to take the advantage of thy present frame, for the more effectual pouring out of thy soul to God. Oh beg of God! that now he will not leave thee short of faith, which begins in desires, but that he will cherish these beginnings, and remember his promise, for he hath said, that *he will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed, until he bring forth judgment unto victory*, Mat. xii. 20. 2. If thou hast got this heat in prayer, or any other private or secret duty, hold out in that duty begun, and join therewithal a waiting on God in the use of public means: The spouse that sought Jesus Christ by night on her bed, would not rest there, but now that her desire was up, she would up too, and go to the public assemblies: *I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth*, Cant. iii. 2. The soul that would persevere in her desires, will go from duty to duty, from public to private, and from private to public, and never faint: What, saith the soul, Is Christ whom I breathe after to be found in public? why then to those public assemblies let me go. 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so my soul panteth after thee O God, my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; Oh when shall I come and appear before God!' Psal. xlii. 1, 2. 'O God thou art my God, early will I seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, to see thy power, and thy glory, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary,' Psal. lxiii. 1, 2.

2. Try your desires by the touch-stone of God's word, that you may not be baffled out of them, as if they were spurious: But what are those signs, or marks, by which I may try, and be assured that my desires are right? I answer,

1. Every true desire is ever joined with an hearty willingness,

lingness, and unfeigned resolution to sell all for Christ, to part with all sin, to bid adieu for ever to thy darling delights; it is not an ordinary wish of a natural appetite, like Balaam's; we have many that desire to be happy, but are unwilling to be holy; they would be glad to be saved, but are loath to be sanctified: Now, if thou desirest truly, thou wilt live accordingly, and willingly part with any sin for Christ: What? Is not Christ better than sin, wilt thou say? Oh that I may sin no more!

2. True desire is ever quickned and enlivened with a continued and conscionable use of the means, and it draws from them, by little and little, spiritual strength and vigour; it is not an idle, ignorant, unexercised desire; it were very vain and absurd, to hear a man talk of his desire to live, and yet would neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, nor exercise himself; It is as fruitless and foolish for any one to pretend to a desire of grace and salvation, and yet he would not prize and ply the word, prayer, meditation, conferences, and all the means and ordinances appointed and sanctified by God; desires themselves will quickly vanish, if they be not nourished in the use of means. Take heed then of living above ordinances, if thou lovest thy soul or wouldst have any part in Jesus Christ.

True desire is ever constant, and importunately greedy after supply and satisfaction, it is not begot by the tempest of some present extremity, and then quite vanishing away, when the storm of terror, and temptation is over; this is that the devil looks at; he observes how many in a fit could be content to leap out of their skin to get heaven, and to keep out of hell, but after this is over, they cannot away with crossing their nature, fighting against lusts, wrestling against Satan, labouring for the righteousness of God, and of Jesus Christ above all things, and therefore their wishing, and wouldings come to nothing. Come then, and try thy desire by this mark, which utterly confounds Satan, if thy desire takes root in a truly humbled heart, and never determines nor expires, till thou hast what thou desirest after, if thou criest, Oh give me Christ, or I will never be satisfied! My soul is restless, and it shall be restless, till I have Christ in my arms and hand of faith; sure-

ly this a good sign, and thou mayest build upon it, and at last thou shalt see, he will fulfil the desire of them that breathe thus after him.

S E C T. XIV.

Of Satan's Assaults upon relying on Christ.

THE holy Spirit that leads on the soul by steps begins now to work in the soul a relying on Christ. And this is that act of faith to which justification is usually promised; it is called an affiance, dependance, adherence, reliance, or if there be any word that expresseth the act of an humbled soul, whereby it casteth and reposeth itself upon the promise of God in Christ, for the obtaining remission of sins, and everlasting life, that is it which now the Spirit works in the souls of those whom he purposeth to save.

I would have this well understood and felt; this is that hinge on which the doors of heaven do turn. In this act the poor soul inlightned and affrighted with the sense, and sight of its sin, and misery for sin, and having a sight of Christ, which breeds in it some desires after Christ, it throws itself into Christ's arms, grasping fast about him, and hiding itself in the clefts of this rock, crying and saying, My Lord, and my God, O save me, or I sink! O hold me fast, or I perish for ever. By this act we are accepted for just before God, for the sake and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Now when the devil perceives this, he sees himself gone, and the soul in safety out of his power, only he will not cease to tempt and trouble; and to that purpose, if he cannot prevail against the *esse* of a Christian, he wrestles against the *bene esse*; If he cannot keep off the hand of faith, for laying hold on Christ, yet he will trouble the head and heart of a Christian with cloudy vapours and misgiving thoughts. But first sometimes he keeps off the hand of faith, darkning the soul with a deep melancholly, that it cannot see and remember the promise; or if it be remembered, yet he scars the soul from off the promise; *q. d.* What do you meddle with the promise; it does not belong unto you, you have sinned so and so, and therefore the threatnings and not the promise belong to you.

2. Sometimes

2. Sometimes he breeds in the soul a jealous and suspicious frame, that it will not believe that it doth believe. And hence we have these cries, Alas! I cannot think that I do really rest, and rely on Christ; or if sometimes I be in such a frame, yet at some other times I cleave again to a sensual good, more than to a spiritual promise, or to an heavenly Christ. Oh I do not fully and constantly cling unto the bleeding wounds of Jesus, I am up and down. I rest not continually on the freeness of his love, and merit of his passion, and truth of his promise, as upon a rock of eternity; and is this to rely on Jesus Christ? Oh the depths of Satan!

3. He designs to keep the soul from believing, but if he cannot keep the edifice of faith from being built in the soul, yet he will keep it (if possible) from standing sure. *Simon, Simon, saith Christ, Satan hath desired to winnow thee like wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,* Luke xxii. 31, 32. The word winnow signifies to shake up and down, as with a fan the wheat is used. Look how he dealt with Job, because Satan had no power over his life, he executed his power to the utmost upon the comforts of his life. So he deals with the soul of a Christian, if he have no power over the life of faith, then he will execute his power to the utmost, that the soul may never come to have the comfortable sense of faith; and when he brings his rams to batter his comforts, no wonder if the poor mud-wall of a Christian shakes up and down.

S E C T. XV.

Of the Soul's Wrestling with Satan as to this Assault.

FOR their bearing off the blows in time of temptation, let us consider them apart: And,

1. To that of Satan's endeavouring to sunder or sever the soul from the promise, and to keep it off from faith, do you take this course:

1. Do you gather in promises, that you may have them at hand. I shall instance in such as these, 'Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.—Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will ease you.—If any man thirst,

'thirst, let him come unto me and drink.——These things are written, that ye might believe, and that believing ye might have life thro' his name.——Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' Rev. xxi. 17. Mat. xi. 28. John vii. 37. John xx. 31. Acts xvi. 31.

2. Take possession of the promises, and value them as your own. The prophet recording a promise in Isa. lii. 17, adds thus, 'This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.' If you look into God's book, and find any promise of Christ, or of Christ your righteousness, you should make it your own; for it is your heritage; O lay hold on those promises, and say, This is mine, it is a part of my heritage, and I am to live upon it.

3. If Satan stave you off, saying, Hands off! the threatenings, and not the promises belong to you; tell Satan again, that when you went on in a way of sin, he could tell you otherwise; viz. The promise, and not the threatening belonged to you; but now it is not with you as it was then, now all sin is to you as a burthen, and now every promise is to you as a world of gold, and therefore Satan, didst thou tell me that the promise did belong to me then? surely now much more. Avoid, Satan, for it is written, Come to me ye that are weary and heavy laden with sin.

4. Remember that the same Lord Jesus that invites you, commands you to believe, and rely upon him, and therefore to apply the promises to yourselves, *this is the commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*, 1 John iii. 23. Luther was a man that laboured under great temptations, and being once sorely tempted, and the tears trickling down his cheeks, My friend, saith he, came unto me and said, O my son, why dost thou mourn? Dost thou not know that God hath commanded thee to believe? When, says Luther, I heard that word *command*, it prevailed more with my heart than all that was said or thought on before; so say I now unto thee, Does Satan come with this temptation, and tell thee, The promise belongs not unto thee? Answer, Ay, but the Lord

Lord hath commanded me to believe; and therefore it is my duty to believe, and because I cannot believe unless I apply the promise to myself, therefore I may conclude that the promise doth belong unto me. Thus for the first temptation.

2. For the other, That your relying on Christ is not constant. True faith, faith Satan, is ever alike strong and stedfast; but thy faith is but a wavering, inconstant, fleeting faith. Consider,

1. It is a fallacy and no truth, that faith in the exercise or sense is ever alike strong and stedfast. The experience of all saints can tell you, that faith hath its flowings and ebbings, full and wane. Sometimes a Christian is on the wing, and then he saith, I think if the devil had hold on me, yet I could trust in God for heaven; as Job could sometimes say, *If the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job xiii. 15. But we know that was not Job's temper always. Sometimes I think that if God would take me away in a massacre, I should yield my blood without a repining word: Another time I so doubt my interest in Christ, that I do not know how I should die upon my bed, unless with crying, Lord take me not away with the wicked. David sometimes would not be afraid of his soul going out of his body, if ten thousand swords were ready to cut out a passage; *I will not be afraid of ten thousand of people, that have set themselves against me round about*; at another time he cries complaining and shrieking, *O spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more*, Psal. xxviii. 3. and vi. 3, 39. Faith may be so interrupted, that the pulse of it cannot always beat alike; and yet while there is life, the pulse of faith beats, though sometimes more faintly and deadlly than at other times.

2. Faith, that in the exercise or sense is not ever alike strong and stedfast, yet in the habit or essence is ever true, and truly relies upon Jesus Christ: Sense in a Christian, may not only have a mist cast before its eyes, but (as saith Collins) may have its eyes put out. Christians are misjudging creatures, and too ready upon Satan's temptations to suspect their own happiness; they may call their faith presumption,

presumption, as well as some call their presumption faith. The hypocrite calls his dross gold, and his alchymy silver; and the suspecting Christian is ready on the other hand to call his gold brass, and his silver lead; Christ may be saying in heaven concerning such an one, Thou art saved, thou art saved, whilst he may be crying on earth, O I am damned, I am damned! the angels may be in heaven rejoicing over him whom we see here mourning over his own soul for sin, and will not be comforted: It may be thou sayest, I do not believe, I do not rely on Jesus Christ; but let me ask, Could there be such an hugging and thirsting after Christ, if thou didst not believe on Christ? Could there be such a care to please Christ, and a fear of offending Christ in thy whole life and conversation, if thou didst not rely on him for eternal life and salvation? Could there be such a willingness in thee to part with all for Christ, if thou didst not rely on him as thy portion, and thy all in all? Surely this is impossible, content thyself; if thou hast not the sense, yet thou hast the habit, and not only the habit, but the act of faith also in some measure, at sometimes, tho' it seem very weak.

S E C T. XVI.

Of Satan's Assaults upon Obedience to Christ.

THE last act of the Spirit, as to conversion, is to work in the soul an obedience to Christ: True faith cannot be without works; the soul that truly takes Christ cannot be without works; the soul that truly takes Christ as a Saviour, to free him from the misery of sin, is willing also to take him as a Lord, Husband, and King, to serve, love, honour and obey him: And to this purpose the Spirit now works in such a one, a willingness to spend the remainder of his life in endeavouring after mortification of sin, conquests over corruptions, sanctification, purity, new obedience, ability to do or suffer any thing for Jesus Christ; and this is that which we ordinarily intend by saying, Saving faith is to be operative: That faith which brings forth nothing of holiness, what is it but a dead faith: 'As the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also,' James ii. 25.

Satan that observes this, begets scruples in the soul, as
to

2. That point of working faith, that either fills the heart with an opinion that works are unnecessary, or makes the soul conceit, that the faith it hath is not a working, but a idle, lazy, fruitless, and barren faith. I shall speak to both these.

1. In some Satan speaks strongly, that works are not needful, and therefore to what purpose should they work? Naked Christ, and a naked faith is enough for them: Christ is a priest and Saviour is gospel-news; let them hear such, and only such sermons as hold forth free love, free justification, free grace, without any mixture of the works of the law, to what purpose, say they, is this living faith, or working faith, or power of faith evidenced in strictness of walking? Christ hath redeemed us, and Christ requires no other condition but only this, Believe and be saved; and why then should we vex and torment ourselves by embracing mortification, newness of life, &c.

2. In others (whom I rather mind) Satan suggests that their faith is not a working faith, and therefore no true faith: Convinced they are, that faith and grace, wherever it is, cannot be idle; faith hath its work, and therefore it is called, *The work of faith with power*, 2 Thess. i. 21. But alas! they cannot find any thing in their souls that looks like the powerful works of faith: Satan tells them, that if they do any good, it is but from natural or moral principles, and not from this quickning power of faith, it is not the obedience of faith, as the apostle calls it, Rom. xvi. 26.

S E C T. XVII.

Of our Wrestling with Satan as to these Assaults.

IN repelling these assaults, let us avoid both extremes. And first, to that of denying works, consider,

1. That a naked faith is no faith, that only is true faith which worketh by love, Gal. v. 6. This was the saying of John Huss, Where good works appear not without, faith is not within. There is a natural connection of faith and works, and therefore of necessity both must be in the same subject, tho' both appear not in the same court; faith that embraceth Christ is obediential, and fruitful in all good works; and hence we say, that faith hath

hath two notable acts, first to apprehend and lay hold on Christ; and second to purify and cleanse the heart; O let no man separate those things which God hath joined together; as Christ is made to us righteousness and sanctification; so they that by faith receive the righteousness of Christ, must also be sanctified by Christ; *whoever is in Christ is a new creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17.

2. That good works are necessary by the command of God; for this is the will of God, even your sanctification, 1 Thess. iv. 8. Hence the law of God still remaineth as a rule and directory; and Paul professeth that he delighteth in the law of God in his inward man, Rom. vii. 22. And how often do we read of this command of God in his word? 'Charge them that are rich in the world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life,' 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19. 'For we are his workmanship created in Jesus Christ unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them,' Eph. ii. 10. A multitude of such passages may we find in scripture.

3. That to hold forth Christ only as a Saviour, and not as a prince, faith and not works, it is not right and full gospel preaching: 'This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed on God, must be careful to maintain good works; these things are good and profitable unto men,' Tit. iii. 8. O unfaithful are they in their sayings that deny that which Paul would have Titus to affirm constantly? Surely this is true gospel preaching, 'He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; these things speak and exhort,' Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Paul to Titus, and Peter to the Jews, speak one and the same thing, 'The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, to be not only a Saviour, but a Prince, not only to give remission of sins, but also repentance to Israel,' Acts v. 30, 31. Away, away with that temptation, that works are unnecessary.

2. To that complaint, that the soul cannot find the powerful work of faith in it, All those works of mine, saith the soul, are but natural or moral; or if I have any faith, it is the idlest, laziest, loosest faith that ever Christian had. Give me leave to sum up these directions:

1. Clear up the eyes of thy understanding, and judge aright: Some works may be only the effects of natural or moral causes, but other works respecting the principles and circumstances of them, cannot proceed from any but a true faith: For instance, an unfeigned hatred of every false way, a doing of duty in pure obedience to the command of God, and in pure respect to the glory of God: These are such effects of faith, as no hypocrite in the world either hath or can have. An hypocrite may leave the commission of some sins, or may hate some enormities of life, but he cannot, as David did, hate every false way, Psal. cxix. 104. An hypocrite may fast, and pray, and mourn, as the Pharisee and Ahab did, but he cannot do thus merely out of obedience to God, and for the glory of God: Come then, clear up thy eyes, and see if there be no more ingredients in thy actions than what a hypocrite may have.

2. Set thy faith on work, on the powerful works of faith, and so put all out of question. As, 1. Cause thy soul every day in solemn manner to act that first work of faith, of panting, breathing, desiring after Christ, of trusting, resting, relying on Christ for life and for salvation. 2. Act that next work of faith, of depending on Christ for holiness and sanctification; draw virtue out of Christ's death for the mortification of thy sins; 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin,' Rom. vi. 6. And draw virtue out of Christ's resurrection, for a quickning power from the death of sin to the life of holiness, that as thou art dead with Christ, and buried with Christ, so thou may also rise with Christ thro' the faith of the operation of God, who hath also raised him from the dead. Be much in prayer, meditation, reading, hearing the word, &c. yea, lay out thy gifts, graces, time, strength, riches, interest, to thy Master's

Master's use; think which way thou mayst do most to promote the gospel, to save souls; as Christ bade Peter, *When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren*, Luke xxii. 32. Why thus wouldst thou do in sincerity and truth, thou wouldst put all out of question, that thy faith were not a dead faith, but a living, working, justifying, soul-saving faith.

3. Despise not the day of small things, the breathings of faith are as much true faith as its full voice, when it faith, My beloved is mine and I am his.

4. State thy condition, and see if thou dost not find such a temper of spirit as faith useth to suit the soul with in such a condition; faith hath his change of raiments for gracious souls; sometimes it acts the soul in joy and rejoicing, sometimes only in adherence and waiting: Thou sayst thou canst not find in thy soul such a persuasion of God's love, such an holy rejoicing in God, as the scripture expresseth, to be effects of true faith; why it may be it is a day of darkness in thy soul, and therefore examine the other way: Is not thy heart wrought into a fit temper to wait upon him who hides his face from thee, and to cling unto him that seems as if he would kill thee? This is true trial: First state thy condition, and look for faith's answerable workings to thy condition, as it is stated. And thus much of our wrestling with Satan as to his assaults in our youth, or the time of our conversion, or second period.

I cannot say but Satan in this time hath many more assaults than I have numbred, or possibly can number. As the Spirit's workings are various, so are Satan's counter-workings; the Spirit humbles some much, and comforts others as much: Some, it may be, had a false and counterfeit work before a true one, and others were never enlightened until savingly; and this variety affords rise and occasion for several temptations; I was never thus humbled, says one; nor I thus comforted, says another: I had some workings and enlightnings heretofore, says a third, and I was deceived then, and I may be so now also: And I had a sudden violent work indeed, says a fourth, which came in like a spring-tide, but now the tide is fallen, and my first love is abated. Thus every several way of work-
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Eng lyes open to several exceptions, and hath its several temptations; but the remedy is, that souls should look to the main, and for the manner and measure of the work in every part and place of it, to leave it to the good pleasure of the spirit, who is a free agent, and must not be limited by our reasonings. I fear I have been too tedious in this period, and therefore I shall add no more.

C H A P. IV. S E C T. I.

Of the Devil's Assaults in our Manhood, or riper Years.

THE third period, wherein Satan assaults or combats with us, it is from our manhood, or riper years, until our death, or dying moment. And in prosecution of this, as of the former, first learn we some of those depths or wiles of Satan against us. And second, practise we those duties that concern us in our wrestling with him in these respects:

I. For his assaults in this period, I shall reduce them to this method, viz. They are either persecutions, temptations, or diabolical injections: So one of our worthies divided his fiery darts, his persecutions are by the world, his temptations are by the flesh, his injections are only and immediately by himself: *Satana tela dum certis ea cancellis includere moliebar, visa sunt mihi reduci posse ad persecutiones, tentationes, et injectiones diabolicas.* D. Arrou-smith, *tactica sacra.*

S E C T. II.

Of Satan's Persecution by the World.

HIS persecutions are by the world, so Christ tells the church of Smyrna, 'The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days,' Rev. ii. 10. The devil shall do it; but how should the devil do it, but by the aid of his instrument the world? He is the God of this world, he rules in the hearts of wicked men, he directs their thoughts, wills and affections, and so he moves them, and carries them to persecute the children of God; and casts them into prison.

This is ordinary after conversion; no sooner is the change wrought, and the man brought truly home to

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Christ,

Christ, but by this time he is become the drunkard's song, table-talk to those that sit in the gate, music to great men at their feasts, a by-word to the children of fools, more vile than the earth. Now is it that the seed of the serpent discovers itself; the devil, and his angels, and his sons combine to lay a load of lying imputations, unworthy usages, and airy kind of persecutions upon his saints. In this case the wicked are as presses, and the godly are as olives and grapes. And what can they expect from such men, but to be pressed and squeezed till the blood come out? But why is it that the wicked should be thus enraged against the godly? Have they done them any wrong? Do they wish them any evil? Or would they not be glad to do them good as to their eternal welfare? No question of all this; but ungodly men are compelled by Satan to do what they do; the old serpent hates God, and the holiness of God which shines in his saints with deadly hatred; he knows that he himself was cast out of heaven, and therefore he envies and vexes at the salvation of any. And as thus it is with Satan, so ungodly men (that are Satan's tools and instruments whereby he works) have sucked up the old serpent's poison, and they swell with it, and by it they are enraged against all godliness also, that as it is said of tygers, they enter into a rage upon the scent of fragrant spices; so ungodly men, without any other reason, are in a rage at the blessed favour of godliness, wheresoever it is. 'An unjust man is an abomination to the just, and he that is upright in the way, is an abomination to the wicked,' Prov. xxix. 27.

I know not any that fear God, but in some measure or other they have felt this assault. Blessed Mr. Bolton could say, If Satan meet with a man that is already entred into a state of regeneracy, then he stands like a great red dragon in the way, and casts out of his mouth floods of persecutions, vexations and oppositions; that so he may overwhelm and crush him before he come to any growth or strength in Christ; and to this end he sets on foot and fire too, and whets with keen razors many lewd and profane tongues, to scoff, disgrace, and discourage him in his narrow, but blessed passage to immortality. But how do they do it?

Why,

Why, either by reproaches, slanders, exprobation of his former life, or by odious names of hypocrite, singularist, Puritan, a fellow of irregular conscience and stirring humour, of a factious and contradictious spirit, and such like. Nor is it true only at first entrance, but ever after, for so he goes on; Every faithful Christian knows by good experience, that as he shall stir in a good cause, stand against the corruptions of the place where he lives, or discharge his calling with conscience and faithfulness, that presently he shall have the spirit of profaneness to fly in his face with brutish and implacable malice and insolency. So true is that of the apostle, 'At Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, I endured persecutions; yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution,' 2. Tim. iii. 10, 12.

S. B. C. T. III.

Of Wrestling with Satan as to this Assault.

IN repelling these assaults, consider we the kinds of persecution wherewith Satan assaults; it is either in word or in deed:

1. If it be only in word; as taunts, jeers, reproaches; then consider these rules:

1. Take heed that we be not hindered in our way, or break off our profession of religion because of reproaches; what tho' there be fifth cast in the way, shall we decline our way? Tho' clouds do arise and darken the light of the sun, does the sun cease in its course because it is darkened? No, no, it goes on still, and anon it breaks forth; so should we go on and say, I knew this way would be cloudy, I entered into it upon these terms to be willing to suffer reproaches; this is God's ordinary way towards his people, and I expect yet greater trials than these.

2. Consider, how is God and Christ reproached daily? Consider how is the majesty, sovereignty and authority of God contemned in the world? How are the dreadful threatenings of God, and the revelation of God's wrath scorned in the world? This made Luther to say, No man is able to bear so much contempt as Christ bears daily. And Bolton to say, If any meek spirit should sit but one hour in the throne of God Almighty, and should look

down upon the earth, as God doth continually, he would undoubtedly in the next hour set all the world on fire, and not suffer his wrath to be pacified, or the fire to be quenched; be thou then for ever ashamed to take on, or to break patience for every trivial provocation. Oh what be our names to God's name? Or what are the reproaches of a creature, to the reproaches, dishonour, vilifying of God?

3. Consider the great mercy of God in concealing the secret sins of our thoughts; there are none so innocent, but if God should turn the inside outwards, and discover all the filth and baseness within the heart to the world, certainly it would make them ashamed of the society of men. Now if God conceal these, well may this quiet our hearts, when troubled for any reproach. It is a great work of nature to keep the filth of the body when it is in a man, from being unsavoury to others, so it is a great mercy of God to keep the filth of the soul, tho' it be unsavoury to God, from that unsavouriness that it might be to men.

4. Consider what honour God hath put, and will put on us, besides the honour of reproach itself: For my part, saith Stillingsfleet in his *Irenicum*, I think the ministers of the gospel would want one of the badges of honour belonging to their office, were they not thus reproachfully used. It is part of the state which belongs to the true ministers of the gospel to be followed by such black mouthed lacqueys, who by their virulent speeches, are so far their friends as to keep them from that curse, *Woe be unto you when all men speak well of you*. Hath not the Lord been pleased to bring us into the honourable estate of sons and daughters? Hath he not put his glory upon our souls, and honoured us with that near relation we have to Christ? Hath he not honoured us in the hearts of his saints, men of precious spirits, who know much of God's mind, who are able to judge wherein true excellency consists? When Doeg reproached David with devouring, base words in Saul's court, yet David blessed himself in this, *But I am like a green olive tree in the house of my God*, Psal. lii. 8. *q. d.* Doeg flourisheth in the court, and my name may be blasted there; but in the house of my God my name is precious;

cious; I am there as a green olive tree. Besides what honour hath the Lord provided for us in that other world of souls? If a man were going to be crowned, and some as he goes along contemns him, and vilifies him, what cares he for that? He knows that within a few days he shall be honoured by those that now reproach him; if we believe there are such things to come, that we shall sit with Christ and judge the angels, and judge the reprobates, why should we be troubled at what they say? it will not be long but they shall be forced to call us, The blessed of the Lord, and the blessings of the whole world. It will not be long but Christ will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and set all straight, which slanderous tongues have now made crooked.

5. Make our moan unto God, and lay our case before him. Thus when Rabshakeh reviled God, and the people of God, Hezekiah spread the letter before God, and made his moan there. This was the practice of Job and David, 'My friends scorn me, saith Job, but mine eyes pour out tears unto God,' Job xvi. 20. 'And hold not thy peace, O God of my praise, saith David, for the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me, they have spoken against me with a lying tongue, they have compassed me about with words of hatred, they are my adversaries,—but I give myself up to prayer,' *q. d.* For my part, I go for help to my God; others have evil thoughts to help them, and run to this and that witness to seek help for themselves, but I give myself unto prayer, 'I cry unto the Lord, and he shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah,' Psal. cix 1, 2, 3, 4.

6. Return good for evil, as occasion and providence offers itself. 'Being reviled, we bless, saith Paul, being persecuted, we suffer it, being defamed, we intreat,' 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. Thus if we can pray for our reproachers, and desire good for them, and be ready to offer any offices of love, and respect, and kindness unto them, and so heap coals of fire upon them, there is a great sign of grace, and we have made a good progress in God's way. It was Christ's own command to his apostles, 'Bless them

'that confession, pray for them that despisably use you, that ye may be the children of your Father,' Matth. v. 44, 45. Why were they not children before? Yes, but this declares it; now God owns them for his children. And certainly if we behave ourselves thus, we may have the comfort of this, that our reproaches come to us as to God's people, we are the children of God.

17. If our persecutions be indeed, as to imprisonment, loss of goods, exile, or death, then practise these rules; have all where laid down, &c. in Self-denial, and Saints Sufferings.

S E C T. IV.

Of Satan's Temptations by the Flesh.

SATAN's next assaults, we call temptations, which are by the flesh, our own lusts, or concupiscence; not but that Satan can tempt us by himself, and so can we; he can tempt us, and we not join with him; and we can tempt ourselves, and Satan not join with us; but most times our temptations are mixt, he and we concur, and make one act of tempting; and herein either Satan begins to us, and we pledge him, or we begin to him, and he joins with us. When we by discontent or inward motion expose ourselves to temptation, then we begin to him; but when Satan doth make the offer, by moving the fancy with thoughts within, or by proposing some object without, then doth he begin to us. These ways are ordinary, and it is but rare that the devil will not interpose. Hence Paul speaking of the married, he bids them not to be long asunder, but come together again, lest Satan tempt them for their incontinency, 2 Cor. vii. 6. Why was there not flesh and blood in them, corrupt affections, and natural concupiscence enough to dispose them to lusts, and to make them incontinent? Yes, but they wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. The devil puts in, even in those very things wherein flesh and blood doth assail us also; as we have temptations within, so the devil without sharpens those temptations, and gives them points, and makes them taking, and mingles and joins himself with the temptation.

S E C T, V.

Of Temptations in respect of our natural dispositions.

NOW these temptations are infinite, and past any counting; yet that I may reduce them into some method, they have either a respect to our natural dispositions, to our outward conditions, or to our spiritual estates.

1. Satan hath an eye to our dispositions, he observes what sins we are most inclined by our nature, temper, and bodily constitution, and to those he inclines us, thrusting us, as it were down the hill, where we are apt to run head-long of our own accord, for example, if he find a man ambitiously affected, then he covers his hook with the bait of honour; or if he find a man addicted to voluptuousness, then he covers it with the bait of pleasures; or if he finds a man given to covetousness, then he lays for him a golden snare, or he makes a breach in his heart with a golden word.

In this case, it is the Christian's best skill, as soon as you see, to observe his own nature, temper, and disposition, and to find out what sin he is most prone to; I may call it his beset sin, his beloved sin, his darling pleasure, his minion delight; certainly this is Satan's strongest hold, his tower of greatest confidence and security. Oh how it cleaves and sticks to the soul! Oh what a deal ado must the best saints here with Satan and this sin, before it be killed?

In some this sin is worldliness, wantonness, pride, passion; in other it may be drunkenness, gluttony, gaming, fearful getting, obstinate insatiableness in allowed recreations, or the like. I cannot speak to every of these, for so would the work swell under hand, yet to some I dare not but speak, and Oh that it may be with fruit and profit, both to others and my own soul.

S E C T. VI.

Of Satan's Temptations to Worldliness.

SOME souls the devil tempts to worldliness; he sets them prone to it, and he sets it on, and drives it forward. But how does he that? I answer,

1. He sometimes sets the very image and representations

of the world's glory before men's eyes, and so he tempts them. Thus I am sure he dealt with Christ, *He shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*, Mat. iv. 6. i. e. He offered the images sensibly and actually, after a wonderful and strange manner, making those images to appear to his senses. This is not ordinary, but this, no question, is in Satan's power. If a man by this art can represent to the senses, in a glass, any person or thing, by which he that sees not the thing itself, discerneth a notable image of it; how much more may we think that Satan by his art can represent to the senses the images of things not present?

2. He sometimes sets the very world itself, or the things of the world before mens eyes, and so he tempts them. Thus he set the Babylonish garment in the eye of Achan, and Naboth's vineyard in the eye of Ahab, and Bathsheba the wife of Uriah, in the eye of David; and then according to the proverb, *He comes to the sea by the river, to the heart by the eye*; and indeed, what poison is there almost that he doth not convey into our souls by this very passage? Our eyes are his spokesmen to our hearts; first we see, and then we covet and desire the world, and hereupon covetousness is called by the apostle, the lust of the eye, 1 John ii. 16.

3. He sometimes, and most usually works upon the imagination, affections, and consequently upon the will. And indeed, an easy thing it is for him to move them all, when they are all so willing to receive his suggestions, and of themselves urge the soul to yield to his temptations. This made the apostle to say, *They that will be rich, fall into temptations and snares,—for the desire of money is the root of all evil*, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Satan sees before hand, there's a man resolved that he will be rich, and therefore Satan needs not strive against the stream, let him but use the tide of such a man's will, and he may carry him swiftly into a sea of sin, *They that will be rich fall (without pulling, even as the stone that descends naturally downwards) into temptations and snares.*

S E C T. VII.

Of wrestling with Satan to overcome this Sin.

NOW if this be thy darling sin, then wrestle thus,
 1. Consider worldliness is extremely fertile of ill; what frauds, what deceits, what perjuries, what cruelties, what hatreds, what murders, what villanies have been exercised for the nourishing of this lust? other sins have their aggravations, but this is the most earthly of all other, and in some respect the most unworthy a man; why, man hath a soul, which is a sparkle of heaven and for him to employ it in no other service but meerly to an heart worm, to creep in and upon the ground, this must needs be a very great evil.

2. Consider worldliness is attended with manifold sorrows. As, 1. It is full of cares. 2. It is full of snares; Grins are in gold, bird lime in silver, saith an ancient. 3. It is full of labours, men toil all day, and they cannot rest by night; the fear of losing pierceth as much as the pain of getting, and there is no end of their travel. 4. It is full of trouble of conscience, and flashes of hell-fire.

It may be the devil for a while may conceal these griefs; it is said that 'he shewed Christ the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, Mat. iv. 8. only the glory: He shewed the pleasure, but not the punishment; he shewed the gain, but not the pain; now we knowing this craft, must labour in these temptations to see that which the devil hides, and to apprehend the fearful after-claps, Oh let us labour to see Jael's nail, as well as her milk, the bees sting, as well as her honey, the snakes poison, as well as her beauty and embraces: That speech of Abner is true of the world, 'Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? 2 Sam. ii. 26. Oh let this be considered seriously!

3. Consider *A man's life stand not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth*, Luke ii. 15. A man's life, i. e. the good, and happiness, and comfort of his life, is not in riches, but in God that fills them. And hence we say that the true enjoyment of riches is the portion of God's people, and not of the wicked; they may have them, but they do not truly enjoy them; the devil encourageth them
 to

to crack the nut, but God takes away the kernel, and gives it to them that are godly before them. Is not this the meaning of the preacher, 'God giveth to a man good' 'in his light wisdom and knowledge, and joy, but to the sinner, he giveth travel? Eccles. ii. 26. He gives to the godly wisdom to pursue riches, and to go right ways for the attainment of them; he gives them also knowledge how to improve them, and joy, or comfort of them: But to the sinner he gives travel, to gather and heap up, but not for this comfort; the wicked dig the mines, they plough the ground, but the saints enjoy, they only reap and gather. And is not this the meaning of the apostle, *Godliness with contentment is great gain?* 1 Tim. vi. 6. That two, godliness and contentment, make up riches; thou talkest of gain, but art thou content? and art thou godly? there is the gain, there lies the happiness. In this sense, 'the little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked,' Psal. xxxvii. 16. The solid comfort of all outward things, is the saints peculiar, because of his nearness unto God; never tell me of this great man, and the other noble men, for indeed that which men are, they are unto God; their true value is according to their proportion of the nearness, not the riches, nor to princes, as to the great things of this world, but to God.

4. Consider that of the apostle, 'No man that warreth intangleth himself with the affairs of this life,' 2 Tim. ii. 4. Now, what are we but warriors against principalities, powers, rulers of the darknesss of this world, and spiritual wickednesses? How then do we intangle ourselves with the affairs of this life? it is true, we may use the world as if not, but to be intangled with it is dangerous and pernicious. As rivers that slide in the ocean, touch the coasts and shores by which they run, but they stay not there, so must our souls in their return to heaven, only touch the earth as we pass along, but not stay there for fear of entanglements. Luther tells us, that when the pope sent some cardinals to him, to entangle him with the promise of great wealth and honour, turning himself to God, he speedily said, *Se. nullo sic fatiari ab eo*, that God should not put him off with these low things. O that all soldiers

soldiers under Christ's banner were but of this mind, for soon might they say, The snare is broken, and we are delivered, or then might they do as the tily bird that mounteth aloft towards heaven, when she sees any danger of being pitched; and thereby she frustrates the fowler's hope. *Servants* friends, lift up your hearts, mount on the wings of faith and love, have your conversations in heaven, be much in meditation of those surpassing joys, so will you frustrate Satan's hopes, and escape the world's intanglements or snares.

5. Consider the words of the preacher, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity*, Eccl. i. 2. How? all is vanity; yes, all, and some: I know not any thing in the world but that may I write vanity on it. *Behold thyself*, O deluded world, (saith Dr. Arrowmith) and write over all thy school-doss, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom: and above all thy court-gates, Let not the mighty man glory in his might; and over all thy exchanges and banks, Let not the rich man glory in his riches; yea, write upon thy looking-glasses that of Balaam, Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; upon thy mews and artillery-yards, that of the Psalmist, God delighteth not in the strength of an horse, he taketh no pleasure in the legs of a man: Upon thy taverns that of Solomon, Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise; upon thy magazines and wardrobes that of our Saviour, Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; upon thy counting-houses that of Habakkuk, Wo to him that increaseth in that which is not his; how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay; upon thy banqueting-house that of the apostle, Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God will destroy both it and them, Jer. ix. 23. Prov. xxx. 9. Pl. cxlvii. 10. Prov. xx. 1. Math. vi. 19. Hab. i. 6. 1 Cor. vi. 23.

O the vanity of the world; and of all things in it! Will a man drucken to death, and give his soul to the devil for vanity, emptiness, nothing at all? God forbid.

6. Consider the counsel and promise of God himself.

Let

‘ Let your conversation be without covetousness, and
 ‘ content with such things as you have, for he hath said
 ‘ I will never, never, never, never leave nor forsake thee.
 Heb. xiii. v. The word in the original is so often repeated
 and if one promise be enough to stay thine heart, shall
 five promises in one; but heark again, *To him that over-*
cometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as
overcame, and sit with my Father in his throne, Rev. iii.
 21. One serious thought of sitting in the throne with Je-
 sus Christ, were enough (thro’ grace) to wean a soul from
 worldly mindedness: ‘ He that overcomes shall inherit
 ‘ things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.
 Rev. xxi. 7. Let the world be as nothing, and thou shalt
 have all things; sit loose to thy relations here, and Christ
 will be instead of all relations; ‘ Whoso forsaketh house,
 ‘ or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or
 ‘ children, or lands for my name’s sake, shall receive a
 ‘ hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life,’ Matth.
 xix. 29.

7. Act thy faith upon these promises, Heb. xiii. 5.
 Rev. iii. 21. Matth. xix. 29. O the fulness and freeness
 of these precious promises! How shouldst thou want, that
 by the promise hast a command (as I may say) of God’s
 own purse? Let him that is without God in the world,
 shift and sharp by his wits, but do thou live by thy faith
 in reference to these promises.

8. Commend thyself to God in prayer, that he may
 keep thee faultless before the presence of his glory; that
 he may incline thy heart unto his testimonies, and not to
 covetousness; that he may prepare thy soul, and dispend his
 work, and hasten his coming, *Make haste my beloved, and*
be thou like to a roe, or a young hart upon the mountain of
spices. He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come
quickly, Amen, even so come Lord Jesus. Jude 24. Psa.
 cxix. 36. Cant. viii. 14. Rev. xxi. 20.

9. Look up to heaven, and grow more and more weary
 of the world. A man that would always live here, is like
 a scullion that loveth to lye among the pots; in those blef-
 sed mansions above thou shalt have pure company, and be
 out of the reach and danger of temptations; there is no
 devils

Evils in heaven, they were cast out long since, and we are to fill up their vacant rooms and places. The devil, when he was not fit for heaven, he was cast into the world, a fit place for misery, sin and torment. And now this is the evil's walk, *He compasseth the earth to and fro*. Oh who could be in love with a place of bondage, with Satan's society! Oh who in this pilgrimage would not often look upwards and heaven-wards, and mind his home!

10. Go before-hand into that world to come, mind that eternity into which thou must enter, the Lord knows how soon. It is a wonderful thing, that men of reason that are here to-day, and in endless joy or misery to-morrow, shall ever forget, or should not ever remember such unexpressible concerns. Come, shake off thy worldly mindedness, and instead thereof get this into thy mind, and dwell upon it, within a few days and nights thy soul will be either in heaven or hell, and if in heaven, thou wilt little care for the world then, and why should thy care of it be too excessive now? Or if in hell, the world will leave thee for its pleasure then, only thy sinful care and minding of it, will vex and torment thee everlastingly. O realize this, as if thou wert entering into that other world of souls! Certainly thou standest at the door, thou art daily dying, and even stepping in, there is but a thin veil of flesh betwixt thee and that amazing sight, that eternal gulf, and shall not this wean thee from thy worldliness?

11. Think over thy beginning and thy ending. 1. For thy beginning, it was of nothing: Methinks I am considering what and where thou wast some few years ago, what and where thou wast when thy father was born, or when he was a child; if I lay aside an odd trifle of days, if I take away a short course of running time, no man or woman now living was alive, and then creeping things, tho' they could but creep, did live and rejoice in a comfortable being; and other little creatures had wings, and were able to fly readily here, there, and here again, upwards and downwards; and thou (who now goest with such a grace, and lookest so full-eyed, and buildest such Babels in thy imagination) hadst then no kind of being; these

these churches, these towns, these kingdoms, this heap of kingdoms in the world; were as now we see them, but thou for thy part wast not so much as heard of, and all because thou wast not; the very same sun that rises and sets did shine, now red, now pale upon the world; it ran its day's journey; and constantly kept its time; such birds of the same colours did sing, and hop from branch to branch, and fly from tree to tree, as now they do; beasts and fishes in the same diversity of shapes followed their several instincts of nature, the winds blew cold and warm, and warm and cold again; men and women such as thou art, did as thou dost; and all this while thou wast not: O wonderful! a little while before yesterday thou knewest not that there was a world; that there were angels; that there was a God; thou hadst no knowledge, no being, which is the foundation and ground of knowledge: O think of this beginning! 21 For thy ending, it will be worse than nothing if thou continuest to be a worldling. Still Methinks I see thee lying on thy sick bed, or on thy death bed; oh how pale and wan thou art! thou hadst a fresh and youthful colour the other day; alas! how much art thou changed from the gallant man thou wast? How thy breath labours, how every joint shakes for excess of pain, how every vein trembles, thy eyes fix constantly upon one thing, as if there thou sawest the dreadful sentence of eternity: Oh how little now do all thy profits and incomes of the world please thee! such rich purchase, the favour of such a nobleman; such and such a merry meeting, what do they help thee in this agony? Thy friends are present, yet of themselves they are miserable comforters, human power stands amazed and cannot help thee, and for thyself, thou art so dull and overclouded with the pangs of death, that thou canst not raise from the fog of thy body one clear thought towards God or heaven. See, see, thou art going, thou standest upon the threshold, death looks in at yonder corner, and aims at thy heart; there flew the arrow, and now here's a change indeed; thy soul is gone, but it could not be seen. Verily, verily, here is the mind that hath wisdom, to improve this meditation, so as to avoid the devil's temptation to worldliness, or worldly-mindedness.

S. E. C. T. VIII.

Of Satan's Temptations to Wantonness or Fleishly Lusts.

IT is Satan which tempts men for their incontinency; 1 Cor. vii. 5. And incontinency is in the apostle's story, *turning aside after Satan*, 1 Tim. v. 19. At near correspondence and communion there is betwixt these two, the devil and fleshly lusts; and hence as he is called the unclean spirit, Mat. x. 1. so are they called unclean lusts, Eph. v. 5. or uncleanness itself in the abstract, Rom. i. 24. Eph. iv. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Some call these lusts the devil's captains, that fight at the soul especially, *Bearely betweened. I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul*, 1 Pet. ii. 11.

Quest. How doth Satan stir up these lusts in men? *Answer,*

1. He observes the temperature and complexion of such and such a man, and if it be sanguine, he takes the advantage thereof, and accordingly tempts him to lust, incontinency, and all voluptuous pleasures of the flesh. Hence the apostle was much afraid of his body, as probably being of such a temperature, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a cast away*, 1 Cor. ix. 27. It is an allusion to wrestlers, who fought for mastery, when one did beat the other black and blue about the face; so was he fain to wrestle with his body, to keep under his body, and to bring his body, by mortifying of his carnal lusts, into subjection. He names not his fighting with the world and devil, tho' these be potent enemies, but with the body only, because they could not easily hurt us, if this domestical enemy, and home bred adversary did not betray us; lusts lie in the body like fire in flint, and any temptation will draw them out. This Satan marks in the first place, that he may suitably fit his temptations to the temperature and disposition of the body.

2. Sometimes he sets before such an one a taking object, he presents and holds up a sight or spectacle suitable to his temper. Thus when David *walked upon the roof of the king's house, he saw a woman washing herself, and the woman was very beautiful to look upon, and David*

3. Satan

'sent, and enquired after the woman,' 2 Sam. xi. 2, 3. I make no question but Satan had an hand in this. Many a time such a wanton object is cast into the way by Satan's sight, and he needs do no more to overcome a lascivious mind, if he but say, See yonder is a naked breast, a naked arm, a naked neck, and if such signs hang at the door, you may guess what immodesty is within. This he knows is taking, and thus he overcomes thousands of men, by stirring up their lusts even thro' their eyes.

3. Satan deals with a man a degree farther, he not only presents such and such an object, but he casts in, and injects the motion, he stirs and moves the imagination, (surely that is the devil's room wherein he often doth appear) he works upon the imagination many an impression, and many a suggestion to this and that base lust; in this respect may we all cry out, *O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of death!* Rom. vii. 24. or from these carnal lusts, which are a death to us, or which threaten our spiritual death. A man, while unblameable in his life, may yet have his imagination like a cage of unclean birds, and so in his soul become guilty before God. The apostle Peter speaks of some *who had eyes full of adultery*, (as it is in the original, full of the adulterers) *and that ceased not from sin*, 2 Pet. ii. 14. The meaning is, that imagination set their eyes continually upon the adulterers, so that they ceased not from sin, even while she was absent; they might be restrained from the actings of sin, and yet their hearts burned inwardly with lusts. And this is the meaning of the prophet, *They have made ready their hearts like an oven*, Hos. vii. 6. That as the oven heated is ready to bake any thing put therein, so was the heart of those wicked men prepared for any kind of naughtiness, it lay in their heart and imagination day and night. O the perpetual constant workings of Satan upon the imagination! We say of other parts of the soul, (as of the will and mind) that they are only subject to sin while we are awake, but the fancy or imagination is many times very sinful in the night time. How many polluted and wicked dreams do men fall into at such a time, at which they tremble and abhor themselves when once awaked.

4. Satan can do more than inject and suggest such thoughts, for he can mightily irritate and provoke; he can stir up the heart to be willing to give entertainment to such a lust. *As Satan stood up and provoked David to number Israel,* 1 Chron. xxi. 1. so I believe he stood up and provoked David to ly with Bathsheba; he did not only present the object, and move the imagination, but he provoked David, he never let him alone, but followed him, and solicited him to it. 'Tis true he could not force David to do evil, the will is never forced by Satan, nor can it be, he uses no compulsions beyond a moral persuasion well set on, he hath no imperious efficacy over the will; yet he can strongly stir the imagination, and that exceedingly provokes the will, that it gives consent: And indeed if the soul be naturally destitute of grace, it cannot withstand the suggestions and provocations of Satan, but anon it yields. And this is the manner of Satan's stirring up fleshly lusts in the minds and spirits of the sons of men.

S E C T. IX.

Of Wrestling with Satan to overcome this Sin.

IF this be thy darling sin; if by the constitution and grain of thy body, or by sinister education, or otherwise, thy mind and heart run much this way, then wrestle thus,

1. Avoid all occasions of lusts. The Jewish doctors thus charged their novices, That by no means they should feed their eyes with staring on the generation of beasts, for fear of provocations. It is our wisdom to check the beginnings of temptations, to cast away the very first fancy of lust, with indignation. Surely if we give liberty, and so fall to parly and talk with lusts, they will gain more and more upon us, and then be harder to resist. He walks more evenly that flieth from temptations, and keeps at a distance from that which would ensnare him, than he that suffers the bait to be near him, and at hand. David's woeful experience may tell what it is to give way to a wandering lustful eye; and Joseph's resolution may tell what an advantage it is to fly away, and not to stand and parly with temptations. In this case he wrestles best with the devil, that turns his back on the temptation. *The youth-*

ful lusts, saith Paul to Timothy, 2 Tim. ii. 22. ~~he~~ calls on him not only to avoid, not only to run, but ~~to~~ flee from, or to make all post haste away from them, ~~come not~~ near the door of her house, Prov. v. 8. It was the speech of one, who tho' sick, yet would not have the temptation come nigh him, saying, *Auferte ignem, adhuc enim paleas habeo*, Take away the fire, for I have yet chaff within me.

2. Set a guard on the outward senses. *He that looketh on a woman to lust after her*, saith Christ, *he hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*, Mat. v. 28. There are stories of heathens, that they would not look upon excellent beauties, lest they should have been ensnared; *I made a covenant with mine eyes*, saith Job, *why then should I look upon a maid?* Job xxxi. 1. the eye must be guarded, nor is that all, take heed also of lending thy ears to filthy talk, rotten speeches, wanton discourses, ribald songs: It was the apostle's charge, *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; and let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers*, Eph. v. 3, 5. and iv. 26, 30. Mark here how filthy speech is called corrupt, or rotten communication, like carrion in a ditch, which should cause all that pass by to stop their noses. Oh that any should delight to speak or hear such things! What! say some, may we not jest and be merry without all this a-do? but we answer, Have you no honest mirth than this? will you feed upon that which is carrion and corrupt? will you make merry with that which God condemneth, and threateneth to shut you out of his kingdom for? have you nothing but filthiness, and the service of the devil, and the wrath of God to play with, and to make merry withal? Idle talk is the devil's minstrelsie, and prepareth people to actual whoredoms, for thoughts and words are the preparatives to deeds. The same may we say of unchaste touchings, lascivious behaviours, lustful smilings, &c. why all these must be avoided; a sparkle if it ly maketh a great fire; a little leaven doth run thro' the whole lump.

3. Act

3. Act all thy affections of desire, and love, and joy on **Jesus Christ**. Is not he thy bridegroom? hath not he married thee to himself in holiness? and wilt thou espouse thyself to the devil his enemy, by the meditation of filthy and base lusts? Oh what indignity is this to Jesus Christ? If there be any thing of Christ in thee, turn the stream of thy desires and longings in a spiritual manner towards him; it is he that is thy husband, whose comeliness should be always in thine eye, and whose beauty should for ever inflame thine heart, whose love should draw out thine affections strongly, and whose converse should fill thy mind, and enlarge it all together; here is one that should lead thee captive body and soul. Now for this excellent One to be out-bid by so base and harlotry love, for Jesus Christ to be cast off, as if not fair or worthy enough for a polluted creature, how should it but be deep in the heart of God, and of Jesus Christ? Hark how the apostle questions, *Know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid,* 1 Cor. vi. 15.

4. Avoid idleness, for that is the proper soil for these weeds to grow in. Fancies of sinful lusts seldom offer themselves where the soul is busied in some innocent and virtuous employment. A man that diligently follows his particular calling hath something else to mind, but if he gives himself up to idleness, then Satan is busy with a bait: As a standing pool, not having any course of running, groweth filthy of itself, and full of toads and noisome vermine, so the heart that is not taken up in some honest calling, is a fit place for the devil wherein to breed, and to ingender lusts. What was the reason why the Sodomites grew so filthy and unclean, but because having the most fruitful and abundant country in the world, they grew rich, and gave themselves to nothing else but to ease and delight? their nature was no worse than others, but their idleness did so corrupt their hearts, as the devil had liberty to cast in, and they had leisure to put on all monstrous and unclean desires.

5. *Keep under thy body, and bring it into subjection*

1 Cor. ix. 27. Subdue thy flesh to the obedience and discipline of the Spirit of God. My meaning is not to fasten any thing of will-worship on thee, such as scourges, hair-cloths, pilgrimages, vows of willing beggary, and perpetual continency. The keeping under of thy body is a business of another nature, and consists in the mortifying of lusts, and in the exercises of piety; and yet this I grant, that intemperance and delicacy in meat and drink is herein forbidden; the more the fuel, the greater is the flame; the body must be so dieted, as that the nimbleness and readiness requisite to a spiritual combat may still be maintained. This was Paul's care, *lest that when he had preached to others, he himself should have been a cast-away*: A cast-away, what's that? Not a reprobate, as if he were uncertain of his election, but reproveable, or unapproved. It is a metaphor taken from those who proved masteries, and hath a regard to those times when there were certain colleges or academies (like our artillery gardens) for exercise of arms, where the novices that submitted not themselves to the rigour of their discipline or were found tardy in their trials, or of purse or unwieldy bodies, were cashier'd or reprov'd by their masters. In this respect Paul kept his body under, lest he should have been reproveable, or unapproved, as those were that poorly and faintly wrestled, or ran for the prize.

6. Be in the use of holy ordinances. What ordinances?

1. The word, whether read, or heard, or meditated on. Paul calls it the sword of the Spirit, Eph. vi. 17. When Christ had his combat with Satan, he made no use of his authority to command him away, but of the word, *Thus it is written*. Mere reason was never appointed by God to drive away Satan, but run we to the word, and that will do it: I have suffered, said Luther, many great passions, but so soon as I lay hold on any piece of scripture, and slayed myself upon it, as upon my chief anchor-hold, straightway my temptations vanished. Hence we are commanded to search the scriptures, as men search in mines of gold, and the rather, because here is all gold, and no dross. The particulars that herein thou art to follow, are these,

1. Thou

1. Thou must have ready the precept forbidding that sin to which thou art prone; what is it, uncleanness, urge then these texts, Avoid Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt not commit adultery; and avoid Satan, for it is written, Mortify your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence. Again, avoid Satan, for it is written, This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence; for God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness,' Col. iii. 5. & Thes. iv. 3. 4. 5. 7.

2. Thou must have ready the threatening, that if thou yieldest, thou endangerest all. Eve was strict enough to mind the commandment, *God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it*, Gen. iii. 3. but when she came to the threatening, where God said, *Ye shall surely die*, she falters, and hath it thus, *Left ye die*. Take care therefore of this, to add the threatening to the prohibition, not only to say it is written, Thou shalt not commit adultery, but withal, Fornicators and adulterers God will judge. 'The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, shall inherit the kingdom of God,' Heb. xiii. 4. Gal. v. 19, 21. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Lust, as it is kindled of hell, so it shall be there perpetually punished; the holy angels will at the last day be most active against such, to bring them to condign punishment, 2 Pet. ii. 10.

3. Thou must have ready the promise both for avoiding and rewarding.

1. For avoiding the temptation, thou hast these promises; 'Who so pleaseth God, shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her. And the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the

coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it,' Eccl. vii. 26. 1 Thess. v. 23, 24.

2. For rewarding thee if thou overcomest, thou hast these promises, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And I looked, and lo a lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. These are they which are not defiled with women, for they are virgins; these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb,' Mat. v. 8. Rev. xiv. 14. O live by faith and feed on these promises!

3. Prayer. A man is never overcome by temptation as long as he can pray against it, he may be perhaps more troubled then, but what if he be, let him pray on still, yea, pray with perseverance, and all manner of prayer, and the end will be, that if he do not give over to pray, Satan must, and will give over to tempt. But what should I pray for? Why, pray that God may purify thy heart, and sanctify it by his holy Spirit, pray that God may give thee strength to overcome Satan in his fiery temptations, tell him that thy lusts and corruptions are too hard for thee, and therefore thou art forced to bring to him this unclean devil, and either he must help thee to cast him out, or thou shalt not prevail. Pray also that God may give thee patience to wait upon him, till he shall perform thy desires; how long thou must be put to wait, I know not, but if thou diest waiting, thou shalt be blessed; only pray that it may be, and wait with patience till it shall be, and God will come in then in his appointed time.

4. Meditation. But on what should I meditate?

1. On God's presence, he sees, knows, understands thy actions, words, gestures, thoughts within thee; thou wouldst be ashamed to be seen of men, and is not God of purer eyes? Oh let thine heart lie on his eye!

2. On the shortness of pleasure, it is but momentary, but the gnawing of thy guilty conscience will abide for ever.

3. On thy mortality. O let thoughts of thy death be the death of thy lusts! *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers, and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts,* 1 Pet. ii. 11.

4. On hell fire. Fiery sins will beget fiery torments. I have read a story of a young virgin, that being tempted of a young man to the act of uncleanness, she gave him this answer, If you will grant me one thing, said she, I will satisfy your demand; he told her he would; Well then, said she, I desire you would put your finger for a whole hour to burn in this candle. O, said the man, what you ask of me is unreasonable: It is true, said she, it is unreasonable, but you ask me a request more unreasonable, to satisfy you in a thing for which I shall not only burn an hour, but for ever and ever in the fire of hell. The like story is that of a young man, who every time he felt lust to arise in him, he would run to the fire and put his finger in the flame, and scorch his finger, and then would reason with himself, and say, O my soul! and O my body! if thou canst not endure a minute's time to hold thy finger in the fire, how wilt thou endure to all eternity to have not only thy finger, but thy whole body in hell flames? And by this means, as he saith of himself, he got much strength to mortify those burning lusts within him.

4. Looking unto Jesus in his death. Art thou troubled with a spirit of uncleanness? go to the cross of Christ, contemplate his death, consider seriously and sadly his bitter, shameful, painful sufferings, and then cry, O that virtue may come out of the death of Christ to mortify my lusts! Certainly there is a conveyance of mortifying virtue flowing into the soul in the time of its viewing, eyeing, contemplating, reflecting upon Christ crucified, Christ lifted up, and this comes from the secret presence of God, blessing this our looking upon Christ, as the ordinance by which he hath appointed to make an effectual impression upon the heart. It may be when all is done, this sin, as to some babbings within, will not die nor cease in thee altogether, only thro' the grace of Christ it shall not reign, it shall not have dominion over thee, Christ's death will kill it by degrees, and be thankful for that.

5. The last ordinance I shall name is marriage, and the due and lawful enjoyment of it. This is a principal end of marriage, to keep a man chaste; *It is good for a man not to touch a virgin, nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife*, 1 Cor. vii. 1, 2. And if this prevail not, see whether thou hast not been guilty of uncleanness before marriage: If so, thou must truly repent of it, for marriage without repentance abates not the power of lust. Be in the practice of all the particulars mentioned before, avoid all occasions of lust, set a guard on thy senses, for thou mayst be drunk with thine own fountain, if either in eye, or ear, or tongue, or hand, or out of time, or out of measure, thou abusest thyself; set thy affections of desire, and love, and joy, on Jesus Christ, take heed of idleness, and idle company, keep under thy body, be in use of holy ordinances, bring the unclean devil to Christ himself to be cast out, and if the word or prayer will not do it, add fasting to all, and either in ordinary or extraordinary duties God will be seen. And if ever thou diest to lust in thy affections and in thy conversation, if ever thou gettest the victory and God ease thee of thy vexation, and give thee a chaste mind to thy content and comfort. Oh remember to be thankful, lest the temptation come again, and bring seven temptations with it worse than himself.

S E C T. X.

Of Satan's Temptations to Pride.

SOME men are naturally and by disposition prone to pride; not that any one is free, but some are more prone than others. Indeed there is a great dispute which is the master sin in every man? No question, as we have said, in every one is some one sin, which carries one one way, another another way; and this sin, whatsoever it is, ariseth from complexion, education, condition, and other causes and occasions, which often varies, as the temper of our bodies, and the order of our estate doth change: Hence this year it is one sin, and seven years hence (as every seventh year there is a sensible change in the humours of the body) it is another sin. But that sin of all sins, which runs thro' all ages, and thro' all the race of mankind,

kind, it is pride; and in this respect, this is the captain sin, the most general and universal sin in all the world. Unbelief may have that name, and be well called our master sin in respect of justification; but the chief sin, which is our greatest moral vice, and carries continually the greatest power with it in respect of sanctification, it is the sin of pride. All other sins do a kind of homage to pride, as to their king and lord. Other sins that we (speaking from feeling) do call our master sins, are made use of by God to humble his saints, and to eat out this sin, and therefore this sin of pride is in that respect also the chiefest sin. As we see in trees there is a master root, so in original sin the master root is pride; and therefore God who resists all other sins, is said especially to resist this sin afar off, Psal. cxxxviii. 6. he cannot abide the sight of it. Now Satan that knows this full well, labours with might and main to provoke all men to this sin; it was his own sin, the very sin that made him of a blessed angel a cursed devil, and therefore he chiefly labours to derive this sin to all the sons of men; and indeed he so far prevailed on our first parents by telling them, *Ye shall be as gods*, Gen. iii. 5. that ever since this sin hath claimed a kind of regency in the hearts of all: as we are sinful, so we are all proud, all would be flattered to an esteem of themselves, *Ye shall be as gods*, is a temptation to all sorts of men. Hence we say pride is a weed that grows in every ground, yea, on humility itself. Do we not see men pretend to humility for their greater rise in the world? What self-denial and hardship will men and women endure for this very sin? Witness naked breasts, and naked arms, and naked shoulders, we all hold of Adam *in capite*; pride was the first and great sin in Adam, and so it is in all his seed; we had this lust from him, and he had this lust from the angels: O the pride of angels! it gives them their fall; and O the pride of Adam! it gave him his fall; and O the pride that is in us! and therefore without repentance we may also perish by this epidemical sin.

S E C T. XI.

Of our Wrestling with Satan to overcome this Sin in several particulars.

THAT by God's grace we may be able to wrestle with Satan and this sin; we may do well to observe some things in particular, and then deal with it in general.

1. In particular. Pride is either conversant about carnal objects, as pride of beauty, strength, riches, apparel, &c. or about spiritual objects, as pride of gifts, graces, privileges. I shall speak to both these.

1. For the former, as the objects are several, so is respect of them severally, consider thus,

1. For beauty. Consider thy beauty is but skin deep, and never was any so beautiful, but the flowers of the field, such as the rose and lily, do in beauty of colours go beyond them. This made the wise man say, *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vanity, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised*, Prov. xxxi. 30. that is the true comeliness and best beauty which a picture cannot express. Art thou fair and beautiful, saith Chrysostom, why, this is the glory of daws and not of men; thou art not fairer than the peacock or the swan: Do we not see harlots and effeminate men have a great share in this glory? Besides, what loathsome matter lieth hid under this fair skin? What filthy excrements are they that issue out of the nose, eyes, and ears, and pores, and other passages? If the fountain within were but viewed whence all these come, how might this humble thee? I may add this ill of beauty, it is used most frequently by the devil most ordinarily for a bait to sin, it is a shining flame to set men's hearts on fire with unlawful lusts. But if there were nothing else, alas! to what purpose art thou proud of a thing so mutable, a little scratch impairerh it, and a greater wound doth quite deform it; a day's sickness doth much abate it, or if it be but of a week's continuance, it doth quite deface it; yea, so fading is it, that a little sun-shine robbeth us of it; or if it be preserved from the violence of extraordinary accidents, yet time will by little and little steal it away. When old age cometh, it ploughs deep furrows in the

most

most beautiful visage, it changeth the colour, and when death comes, the most amiable countenance will be deformed, that they who most admired it will then loath it. Oh that thou would turn the edge of thy affections from this earthly trash to spiritual and heavenly beauty! Oh that thou wouldst mind the beauty of the mind, which consists in virtue, and the sanctifying graces of God's Spirit! Old age shall never make any wrinkles in the face of this, sickness shall never hurt this, violence shall never deface this, grief and sorrow shall not impair this, death itself shall not blemish or disgrace this, but rather it shall crown this beauty of grace with the beauty of glory.

2. For strength. Consider this is common to men and beasts; how vain is it therefore that any should be proud of such base vanities? Art thou strong, saith Chrysostom, and art thou therefore proud? Why the lion is hardier than thou, and the boar is stronger than thou; yea, robbers, thieves, ruffians, and thy own servants excel thee herein, and dost thou think this is a thing praise worthy? Thou art strong, but can this deliver thee from those innumerable dangers unto which this frail life is daily subject? *The king is not saved by the multitude of an host, neither is the mighty man delivered by his great strength*, Psal. xxxiii. 16. It can neither defend thee from the judgments of God, nor from the assaults of the devil; it can neither deliver thee from sickness nor death. Oh that thou wouldst be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. vi. 10, 11. Oh that thou wouldst put on the whole armour of God, that thou mightest be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, Phil. iv. 13. Why, this is strength to purpose, hereby thou mightest be able to do all things thro' Christ that strengthneth thee, hereby thou mightest stand manfully in the day of battle against all the assaults of thy spiritual enemies; bodily strength without this is little worth: Oh what will become of thee in the day of trial?

3. For riches; consider thy riches will not avail in the day of the Lord's fierce wrath; what is a fat portion to a lean soul? Outward things never mend us, but often worsen us, for a man to be proud of riches, it is as if an horse

horse should be proud of his trappings, thy riches are but thorns, which unless a man hold warily, he is sure to be pricked: Hence are so many epithets of riches in scripture, that they may wean our affections from priding in them, as *the mammon of unrighteousness, the riches of the world, the deceitfulness of riches*, Luke xvi. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Mat. xiii. 22. Augustine adds, that they are an evil master, a treacherous servant, fathers of flattery, sons of grief, a cause of fear to those that have them, and a cause of sorrow to those that want them. Oh that men, Christians, professors of religion, should ever be choaked with these thorns, or intangled with these snares, or especially overtaken with pride, of such sordid, carnal, worldly things.

4. For apparel; consider, that this was the effect of sin; had our first parents continued in their state of innocency, they had remained glorious in themselves, but sin brought shame, and this shame they would cover by the help of garments: What then is our apparels but a daily monitor to call our sin and shame to remembrance? Oh that men should vaunt themselves in this vanity! As if a thief being adjudged to wear an halter for his crimes, should make him one of silk, or golden twist, and because it glitters, should presently grow proud of that, which indeed should humble him: Why, our apparel is the very sign of our sin, and shall we convert that which is given us to hide our sin, into sin itself? Before Adam sinned, the most glorious garment would have been to him but as a cloud to the sun, and after Adam sinned (to put him in mind of his sin and shame) God clothed him not with silks or velvets, curiously embroidered with gold and silver, but with beasts-skins, surely this was to humble him, and not to puff him up with pride; this was to mind him of his brutish condition, yea of his frailty and mortality, seeing the creatures for his sake, were already subject to death and vanity. Oh that thou wouldst mind the word, which bids thee array thyself with *shamefacedness and modesty, not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly apparel*, 1 Tim. ii. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 3. Oh that thou wouldst consider thyself a pilgrim upon the earth, and
therefore

Therefore thou shouldst not go as a citizen, or courtier of this world! Oh! that as a nobleman would be ashamed to borrow cloths of a beggar, so thou wouldst rather be ashamed than glory in the ornaments which thou borrowest from inferior creatures, as from one his fleece, and from another his skin, and from another his feathers, and from another his bones, and from another his entrails, excrements, what not? Why alas, beasts, and birds, and silly worms, have the first title, and most natural interest to all thou wearest, and thou comest to it only by conquest, violence and force of arms? Oh that thou wouldst remember, that thy gay apparel doth not make thee more religious, humble, just, and temperate, it doth not abate thy pride, but rather encreaseth it, it doth not extinguish the heat of lust, but rather inflames it; it doth not warm thy heart with charity, nor expel the force of Satan's darts, but rather causeth thy love to freeze, and lays open thy soul to Satan's blows! A vicious man adorned with glorious garments, is like a dead corps stuck with flowers, or like the stately temples of Egypt, which had the outward courts, porches, walls, and roofs richly adorned with gold and silver, and curious carving and engraving, but if a man went into the inmost parts to see the idol which was there worshipped, instead of some stately image set out according to the rest of the bravery and pomp, he could find nothing but the base picture or resemblance of some cat, or crocodile, or ugly serpent: These men who load themselves with costly apparel, if this outward glory were but removed, and they more narrowly searched into the inmost temple of their hearts, instead of God's image shining in its spiritual graces, we should find perhaps crocodiles and serpents, lusts and pride, and wantonness immodesty, and such like sins. O that men professing mortification should ever be thus vain!

2. For the other objects of pride, as they are more spiritual, so it concerns Christians to be more heedful: A meer natural man is proud of his beauty, strength, riches, apparel, or the like; but a Christian is chiefly prone to be puffed up with higher and more raised perfections, as being more suitable to his Christian calling. Now as these
objects

objects are several, so in respect of them severally, consider thus.

1. For gifts; consider, these gifts are not thy own, but God's, and not for thyself, but for others edifying, and one day thou must make a reckoning for them all: And what, art thou proud of another's bounty given on these terms? Suppose a man should leave a chest of money in thy hands, to be distributed to others, what folly were it to put it into thy own inventory? Bernard was much troubled with this temptation when even in preaching pride would be whispering in his ear, *Bene fecisti Bernardus*. O well done Bernard. But he was humbled for this in the midst of his sermon, being interrupted by Satan, he turned to him, and spake these words, *Non propter te hoc opus captum est, non propter te, nec in te finitur*: This sermon was not begun for thee, nor shall it end in thee. Pride is a worm bred in the rose, and the more parts men have, the more doth this disease increase. But Oh consider that of the apostle's; 'What hast thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?' 1 Cor. iv. 7. Matthew Paris relates of a great scholar, much admired for his learning, that in his lectures once in the schools, proving the divine and human nature of Christ with applause, he most arrogantly said, That Christ was beholden to him for that dispute, and that he owed, as it were, his divine nature to his learning; upon which blasphemy he was immediately stricken with ignorance, and such foolishness, that he was afterwards taught the Lord's prayer by a little child. Oh that men should ever pride themselves about notions and apprehensions! Oh that men should forget the account they must give and make of every talent! It may be thou hast a great measure of gifts, Oh take heed! for if thou doest unprofitably bury them, or abuse them unto sin, the greater and more fearful shall thy condemnation be; 'The servant that knoweth his master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes,' Luke xii. 47.

2. For graces; consider they will not justify, they cannot save, why then art thou proud of thy own righteousness?

self? Those who have had more to shew than thyself, have thrown away all, and gone a begging to Jesus Christ. Read Paul's inventory, 'Tho' I might have confidence in the flesh, if any man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more, circumcised the eight day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law a Pharisee, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless; and what of all this? Why, all this was nothing, 'What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ, yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is thro' the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' Phil. iii. 4-9. I am not against graces, and gracious actings, but I am against pride in them, or trusting to them: Certainly grace will never thrive this way. Gurnal observes, That some have been a long time professors, and yet come but to a little growth in love to God, humility, heavenly mindedness, mortification; and 'tis worth the digging, to see what lies at the root of their profession, whether there be not a legal principle that hath too much acted them; did they not think to carry all with God from their duties, services, graces, or gracious actings? Alas! this is as so much dead earth, which must be thrown out, and gospel principles be laid in the room thereof. Methinks I am in this taken with the author, and therefore hearken to his advice, try but this course, and see whether the spring of thy grace will not come on apace. David gives an account how he came to stand and flourish, when some that were rich and mighty, on a sudden withered, and came to nothing; 'Lo this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, but I am like a green olive tree in the house of God, I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever,' Psal. lii. 7, 8. Whilst others trust in the riches of their righteousness and services, and
make

make not Christ their strength, do thou renounce all, and trust only in the mercy of God in Christ, and then thou shalt be like a green olive tree, in the house of God.

3. For privileges, such as spiritual comforts, sense of pardon, manifestations of God's love, &c. consider, they were given (if ever they were given) to humble thee and not to make thee proud. It is true, that in the best of saints, there remains such dregs of corruption unpurged, that the devil often makes these privileges an occasion of pride; and indeed, the Lord let us see our proneness to this sin, by the short stay he usually makes, when he comes in with any such discoveries. A short interview of heaven now and then cheers up a Christian, who, had he but constant shine, he would forget himself, and grow to wanton. Was not Paul in danger of pride from his short rapture? but therefore it was but short, and God gave him a prick in the flesh to keep him down. If ever comfort bounds, and God dandles thee on the knee of his love, take heed then of this sin of pride. It is God's meaning by this to cheer thee a little, but then to humble thee and not to puff thee up: As when he gave manna to Israel in the wilderness, it was not to swell them, but to humble them, *who fed thee in the wilderness with manna which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee*, Deut. viii. 16. So when God gives us his spiritual comforts, his end is, and his meaning is to humble thee: How can that be why, if not in the gift, yet in the manner of his giving it thou mayest see it. If the Israelites could not see anything in the manna to humble them; for it was not meat food, but delicious food, called angels food, Psal. lxxviii. 23. yet in the manner of dispensing it from hand to mouth in giving them every day their portion, and no more, in keeping the key of their cup board (as one speaks) and making them to stand to his immediate allowance, in this they might know that his purpose was to humble them: thy privileges are precious and rare things; it may be thou art weak in grace, or thou art in the beginning of a Christian course, and lest thou faint in the way, the Lord is pleased sometimes to take thee up in his arms, and to give thee the kisses of his mouth, but presently he lets thee down

again

Again, and makes thee feel thy feet in the ordinary way of duties, and his very cherishing thee, is to humble thee.

Dost thou not see thy weakness, by his carrying of thee in his arms? Weak children are oftner in the mother's lap than those that are strong, and it is but a while, a very little while, that he thus deals with thee. Oh then take heed of pride! lest he send thee a prick in the flesh to let thee blood, or a devil out of hell to buffet thee soundly for thy pride; if he thus dealt with Paul, how much more may he thus deal with thee? Oh consider of this!

S E C T. XII.

Of our Wrestling with Satan in general, to overcome this Sin.

BUT as thus I have dealt with some particulars, so I would propound some general rules, which may differently serve for every latitude, meridian, or elevation of pride.

1. Press into God's presence. Consider of God's greatness, purity, holiness, perfection, majesty. A sight of his glory were enough to humble thee, and cast thee down into a depth of dragons. To this purpose we are called on to humble ourselves in the sight of God, Lam. iii. 10. A sight of God is it that makes the creature shrink into nothing. 'Now mine eye seeth thee, saith Job, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes,' Job xlii. 6. This made Elisha to wrap his face in his mantle; 1 Kings xix. 13. This made the angels cover their faces and feet; this made the twenty four elders to cast their crowns before the throne of the Lamb, Rev. iv. 10. Nothing will more pluck thy plumes of pride than a serious view of the glory of God; as the stars vanish when the sun appeareth, so will our poor candle, when the glory of God ariseth in our thoughts. Come then, look on him, and be humbled; that a creature so vile (as thou wilt then appear) should ever be proud: Then said I, Woe is me, 'for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts,' Isa. vi. 5.

2. Note that sin especially, which all thy life long hath

been of most infamy, and dwell upon it. David once fell foul into adultery, and therefore he cried, *My sin is ever before me*, Psal. li. 3. It kept him very low, 'Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise myself in great matters, nor things too high for me. I am even as a child that is weaned of his mother, my soul is even as a weaned child,' Psal. cxxxix. 1, 2. Paul was once a persecutor, injurious, and therefore he cries, O I am the least of saints, and the greatest of sinners! 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief,' 1 Tim. i. 15. Men are proud because they know not themselves; when Agur had but studied himself, he cries, 'Surely I am more brutish than any man, I have not the understanding of a man,' Prov. xxx. 2. If we would but examine ourselves, and call to mind our foulest sins, and most irregular practices, these would be as the peacock's feet to pull down our plumes. O who could be proud, whilst he were taking in the filth of his most noisome lusts?

3. Observe God's judgments on pride, either on thyself or others. Nebuchadnezzar's pride made his heart like the wild beasts, so that his dwelling was with the wild asses, they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven. And as on him, so God's judgments fell on his son, for it so follows, 'And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart though thou knowest all this, but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven, and therefore God sent the writing, *MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN*,' Dan. v. 21, 22, 23, 25. Are not these terrible examples? With God is terrible majesty, saith Job, chap. xxxvii. 22. He shall cut off the spirit of princes, saith David, he is terrible to the kings of the earth, Psal. lxxvi. 12. He cuts off their spirits which are proud, in Hebrew, he *slips them off*, as one would slip off a flower between his fingers, and thus he dealt with Pharaoh, Antiochus, Herod, and other proud tyrants. Attilas king of the Huns proudly gave out, that the stars fell before him, and the earth trembled at his presence, and that he would be the scourge of all nations,

nations, but shortly after he died by a flux of blood breaking out at his mouth, which choked him on his wedding day.

4. Look unto Jesus; and conform to him, yea, by faith draw out the spiritual virtue of an humble Christ. Christ's example is not only directive, but full of virtue, the very hem of his garment, believably touched, would cure this bloody issue. Was not this Christ's own lesson, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' Mat. xi. 29. *q. d.* Learn of me, for I am lowly, I am sent by God the Father into the world, and this is one especial end that I am sent into the world for, even to hold out unto the world a pattern of humility; I am appointed as a great ordinance of God the Father to hold forth this, and therefore look on me, and be ye lowly, as I am lowly. Surely good reason we should be as he was, lowly as he was lowly, and humble as he was humble. When Rebekah came to Isaac, and she saw him walking in the field, and asked the servant who it was, and he said, it was his master's son, presently Rebekah lighted down, and goes on her feet, she would be as he was; he walked, and Rebekah would walk too. It is good reason that the spouse of Christ should be lowly as Christ; and therefore, faith Christ, learn of me, look on me, write after me, let the same mind be in you which was in me. Every Christian is united to Jesus Christ, and should be acted by the same Spirit that Christ is. 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself,' Phil. ii. 5—8. Now let this mind be in you: As pride is the resemblance of the devil, which brought him to ruin, so humility is the resemblance of Jesus Christ, which brought him to honour. O then let this mind be in you, which was in Christ! look at him in all the particular acts of his humility, and by faith draw virtue out of all those acts.

5. Let every act of pride be accompanied with a subse-

quent act of humiliation. If thou canst not prevent this sin of pride, yet check it so soon as ever it ariseth. This was Hezekiah's course, after he was sick and restored to health, he forgot himself, 'and rendered not according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up, therefore there was wrath upon him. and upon Judah and Jerusalem, notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself, for the pride of his heart (both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem) so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah,' 2 Chron. xxxii. 24—26. It is high time to be humbled, and ly low, when thou hast committed such a sin as to provoke God to wrath. 'Hear ye, and give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken. But if ye will not hear, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride,' Jer. xlii. 15, 17. If pride go before, humiliation must follow after; 'Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness; humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up,' Lam. iv. 9, 10.

6. Treasure up some holy principles, and keep them fresh and ready in thy thoughts to quell this sin. When we would suppress weeds, we usually sow the contrary seed; so have thou at hand, and in mind, some contrary seed, some holy principles. I shall instance in these two.

1. Pride is the forerunner of ruin; it is a proverb as true, as commonly spoken, that *pride goes before a fall*. Indeed Solomon in his proverbs gives that for one, *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*, Prov. xvi. 18. And therefore he pourtrayed the proud man to the life, that pictured him snatching at a crown, and falling, with this motto, *Sic mea fata sequor*.

2. Humility is the way to glory. This is often inculcated by our Saviour, *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted*, Luke xiv. 11. and xviii. 14. We are all by nature proud, (as we have heard) we would all be exalted; how is it then that we forget this principle, *The way to rise is to fall*; God gave us a pattern of it in Jesus Christ. First, *he emptied himself, and humbled himself to the death of the cross*,

cross, wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above all names, Phil. ii. 5—9. I know not any good, but humility is a means to obtain it; am I in trouble, and would I have deliverance? The Lord heareth the desires of the humble, Psal. x. 17. Am I in a place of honour, and do I fear to fall? A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit, Prov. xxix. 23. Tho' places of advancement be slippery, yet the humble shall be upheld. Am I disconsolate, and would I see more of God, and of his favour and love? he that is in the lowest pits, sees stars in the day time, The Lord will revive the spirits of the humble, Isa. lvii. 15. Would I be advanced not only on earth, but in heaven? Whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, the same shall be great in the kingdom of heaven, Mat. xviii. 4.

O think of these principles! pride leads to hell, but humility to heaven. It was an answer that a philosopher gave to one that asked him what God did in heaven? Why, said he, he is beating down the proud, and lifting up the humble,

S E C T. XIII.

Of Satan's Temptations to Passion or Anger.

OTHERS are of cholerick dispositions, and so prone to passion or anger, that they break all rules both of reason and religion: Now Satan, that observes their temper, puts on, to make them more raging, fierce, and furious; Satan still hath a great hand, stroke in every sin, he can easily make use of our bodies, by commotion of the humours, he can stir us up to uncleanness, passion, revenge, and all other sensual lusts. Hence carnal desires are called *his lusts*, John viii. 44. and giving place to anger, is in the apostle's language *a giving place to the devil*, Eph. iv. 26, 27. Indeed the heathen, who understood not the operation of the devil, thought all our conflicts were against internal passions, but my text is clear, 'We wrestle not only against them, but against principalities and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in heavenlies.' I shall not deny but sometimes we begin the temptation, and sometimes Satan; as Zanard speaking of the outward power of the devil

devil over tempests, Sometimes, said he, he may raise the matter, at other times the matter being prepared, Satan may adjoin himself, and make the tempest more impetuous. And yet for all this, it must be granted, that there is a just, and harmless, and holy anger, *Be ye angry, and sin not*, saith the apostle, Eph. iv. 26. Thus Jacob was angry, Gen. xxx. 2. and Moses was angry, Num. xvi. 15. and Nehemiah was angry, Neh. v. 6. and Jeremiah was angry, Jer. vi. 11. and Christ himself was angry, Mark iii. 5. But this passion of anger I speak of, it is that which is unjust and sinful, it is anger which gives place to the devil, it is an anger which misses in object, time, measure, end, and other circumstances. Give me leave but a while to insist on these, and then you will know what anger is sinful, and what anger I mean.

1. It is such an anger as misses in respect of the object; holy anger hath a right object, as matters of reason, religion, the honour and glory of God, and of Jesus Christ, but sinful anger is either exercised about nothing: Thus many are angry, and they know not wherefore, There's a great deal of cry, as they say, and but little wool; or it is exercised about every thing. Thus every trifle, and every toy, any thing in the world that falls out in the least manner against their minds, puts many into anger; or it is exercised against some excellency that God hath bestowed upon others more than themselves. So Saul was angry with David, and Cain was angry with Abel. When tygers smell the fragrantcy of spices, they are put into a rage of fury (as sometimes you have heard) so many are angry at the graces of God's Spirit which they observe in others. These, and such like, are the objects about which sinful anger is conversant.

2. It is such an anger as misses in respect of time. Holy anger is deliberate, seasonable and short; but the anger which the devil sets on, it is,

1. Sudden and indeliberate; thus many men and women have tinder spirits, or gun powder spirits, as soon as ever the fire comes to them they are all in a flame. Against this saith Solomon, 'He that is angry dealeth foolishly,' Prov. iv. 17. 'And be not hasty in thy spirit to be

* be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools,' Eccl. vii. 9. From this hasty anger, we call the passion of anger *hastiness*, such a man is an hasty man, or such a woman is an hasty woman. Now this is folly, saith the wise man, * He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding, but * he that is hasty of spirit, exalteth folly. Wherefore my * beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow * to speak, and slow to wrath,' Prov. xiv. 27. James i. 19. Holy anger is slow, wherein it imitates God, but sinful anger is sudden.

2. It is unseasonable. Thus many are angry in the presence of others, who should not see it, or they are angry when they see others angry before them. This minds me of the counsel that one gave to a young married couple, who were both of passionate choleric spirits, that they should be sure not to be angry together, it cannot be good to add heat to fire; or they are angry when they are about to perform a duty. this is the devil's season; many are angry either before sermon, or after it, or it may be, immediately before or after prayer: to these, saith Christ, 'First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,' Mat. v. 24. And of these, saith the apostle, 'I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up hands without wrath,' 1 Tim. ii. 8. That wrath at such a time is an im poisoning and heavy hindrance, which clogs and clips the wings of a prayer, that it can never be able to ascend up into heaven; and therefore this anger is very unseasonable.

3. Sinful anger is constant, it abides too long, the sun goes down upon it; when the apostle said, Be angry and sin not; he adds, let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil, Eph. iv. 26. Any man that retains his anger longer than evening, gives place to the devil. Many can say, Shall I give way to mine enemy? Shall I yield to him that hath done me such and such wrong? But they little consider, that in retaining their anger they give way to the devil, they yield to the devil. What! is it not better to yield to your brother, tho' your inferior, than to yield to the devil? Shall men live as if they drank no other waters but that of Massah

and Meribah, of the waters of strife? As the church said concerning God, Jer. i. 6. Will he reserve his anger for ever? so may I say of such, Will they reserve their anger for ever? Surely this anger is sinful in respect of time.

4 It is such an anger as misses in respect of measure; holy anger keeps within compass, but so doth not this, nor do I wonder, for amongst all the affections or passions of the mind, there is none more like to abound in measure than the passion of anger, it is a fiery passion, and fire we know is apt to exceed: How great a fire will one spark kindle!

4. It is such an anger as misses in respect of the end; holy anger hath right aims and ends, as the glory of God, and good of souls: But what is the end of this anger? What! is it a passionate man aims at? If I may answer for him, either he aims at this, that he may satisfy a peevish spirit, or he aims at this, that he may bring others under him, or he aims at this, that he may be esteemed of others as somebody in the world, or he aims at this, that he may have his will another time. These are the chief ends of a passionate spirit. But oh it is otherwise with a gracious spirit! such an one may be angry sometimes, but it is not to satisfy himself, but to bring things into order, it is not to subject others under him, but to bring all under God; it is not to appear somebody in the world, but that the glory of God may more appear; it is not to have his will more at another time, but that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; it is not that he may avenge himself, but that he may do good to others, never more aiming at the party's good that he is angry withal, than at that very time when he is most angry. Now you may see what anger I inveigh against, and what anger it is which gives place to the devil.

S E C T. XIV.

Of our Wrestling with Satan to overcome this Sin.

IN resisting Satan and this sin, do you wrestle thus,
 1. Be you humbled for what hath been been past; Were you but humbled for sin in general, it would much weaken your spirits; but were you humbled for this particular sin, in that you have been formerly so peevish and
 pettish,

pettish, Oh the good that you might get by this humiliation! Is not this the way to mortify sin at the root? As when weeds are moistened at the root, then it is the time to get them up, and not when all is dry. So when the heart is humbled for this sin at the root, when the heart is bedewed with tears of repentance, and becomes soft and fleshy, which before was stony and hard, then will this sin up or be mortified with far more ease. I lay this humiliation as the foundation of all other helps, many being convinced that such or such a thing ought not to be done, they resolve presently they will do so no more, but they bottom not their resolution upon humiliation, and so all comes to nothing, but as the morning dew it quickly vanisheth. O begin here, repent of sins past, of former pettishness and peevishness of spirit, and upon this foundation we may comfortably hope the building may stand, notwithstanding the rain, and floods, and winds that may beat upon it.

2. Resolve and renew your resolutions and covenants with God from day to day; it may be you find that naturally you are overcome with passion, and therefore each morning think but thus with yourself, I may meet with occasion this day to disquiet my heart, I have had experience, that tho' the day hath been fair in the morning, yet it hath been foul before night; I see I am weak, I have sometimes promised and covenanted with God against this sin, but I have been overcome again and again, I will now therefore in the strength of Christ resolve that this day, whatsoever falls out, I will bear it quietly, and if I be wronged I will implead it the next day, or the next opportunity, only this day I will retain my quiet of spirit. Why thus would you resolve, and renew your resolution from day to day, who knows but it might gain upon your hearts to overcome passion? And if a little were but done for the present, yet would it not be so hard as now it is to overcome it afterwards.

3. Set a high price upon the quietness of your spirit, *Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife*, Prov. xvii. 1. There is as much difference betwixt quietness and strife, as betwixt a stormy,

a stormy, dark, tempestuous night, and a calm, sweet, sun shine summer's day. When the apostle speaks of the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, he adds, that in the sight of God it is of great price, 1 Pet. iii. 4. Other graces are precious with God, but a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price, it is worth a great deal, it is a jewel of great worth; kings, and princes, and nobles wear jewels sometimes worth thousands of pounds, but every meek man and woman that goes up and down, tho' never so poor, yet they wear a pearl worth a world; thus God esteems it, and so should we also. Tell me you that bear crosses with a quiet and meek spirit, do you not find a great deal of comfort in this quiet and meek frame? Why then say, It shall cost me dear but I will keep this frame: If a man should throw dirt at you, and you had a golden ball in your hand, would you throw that away because he throws dirt at you? What if others cast upon you reproaches, and froward words? They have no other weapons for themselves, they scarce ever knew in all their lives what the sweetness of a quiet spirit meant: Oh but you that fear God, and whom God hath adorned with the graces of his own Spirit, do you prize a quiet spirit at an high rate, do you suffer for it, for there is much good in it.

4. Remove the occasions of anger. * As Cotys king of Thrace, when one brought him curious vessels, but brittle, I suppose of glass, or the like, he commended their rare workmanship, yet presently brake them, lest (being of an hasty nature) when his servants by any accident had broken them, he should have been excessively angry. When Saul cast a javelin at Jonathan to smite him, then Jonathan arose from the table, and would eat no meat in Saul's presence. It is our wisdom to get out of the company of such as have offended us, as Jonathan did, rather than sinful anger should break out. Or,

5. If the occasion cannot well be removed, then give reason leave to interpose and divert. It was good counsel which Athenodorus gave to Augustus, that when the object and occasions of choler were in his eye, he should not be moved before he had pronounced over the letters of the alphabet:

alphabet: When the mind is diverted, there may be some room to deliberate, and therefore in this case, divert to some other business, company, pleasant employment, thoughts of content: These are noble coolers, and very convenient to slack this passionate fire. As physicians observe in bleeding, when a man or woman bleeds very violently at the nose, the way to stench the blood is to let them blood in another vein: So those that are passionate, they should labour to turn the channel of their affections another way. For instance, What! do I feel my anger stir? let me stir up fears; oh let me have the fear of the great God before mine eyes; or doth my anger stir? let me stir up sorrow; oh let me grieve for their sin, whereby they have provoked God more than me: Or doth my anger stir? let me stir up love, I am called on to love mine enemies, and will not the heat of love take out the heat of anger! the shining of the sun upon a fire deadens the fire, and surely the beams of love in my heart towards God, and towards his saints, and towards my enemies, should deaden or weaken this fire of passion that is so strong in me. Thus by a wile, as it were, mayst thou subdue thy anger, if thou canst but turn thy affection another way.

6. If diversions will not do it, then stand at the staves end, and resist this sin at its first breaking out. A little thing will quench a great fire, when the fire is new kindled, but if you stay a while, then buckets of water will not do it: *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water,* (I may say, as when one letteth out fire) *therefore leave off contention before it be meddled withal,* Prov. xvii. 14. You are to take as great care of the beginning of anger, as you would be careful to quench a little spark of fire that is in the midst of many barrels of gun-powder; and great reason, for the fire of contention which begins at a little (if not prevented) riseth to a great deal. Camerarius tells us a story of two brothers, who walking out in the evening, and seeing the element full of bright spangling stars, one of them being a grasier wished that he had as many oxen as there were stars in the firmament; then said the other brother, and if I had a pasture as big as the world, where

where would thou keep thy oxen? he answered, in your pasture: What, said the other, whether I would or not? Yes, said his brother: The matter was very light, but it fell out very heavy, for they presently fell to words, drew one upon another, and killed one another. Do we not see many neighbours fall out about very small matters? and if some wise men in the beginning did but mediate between them, how easily might they be reconciled? otherwise the fire kindles to such a flame, that few or none know how to extinguish it, or to make them friends.

7. Be convinc'd it is much better to bear wrong, than to be sinfully angry for wrong. In bearing wrong there is no danger of Satan's hurt; but for the devil to come and tempt thee by this or that wrong, to be in a pet or angry fit, there lies the danger. It is Abstin's expression, when the fowler hath set a net to catch fowls, then he comes and throws stones in the hedges to fright the birds out: So when the devil hath set his nets and temptations to catch poor souls in, then he sets others on to do them wrong, that so he may take them in his net: Oh take heed now of anger! take heed of the net that the devil hath on the other side of the hedge; it is better to suffer wrong from another, than to suffer sin in thy own soul.—But how must I do if I be injured? I answer, 1. Look on God, and consider all thy wrongs and unworthy usages, are ordered by God, for thy everlasting good; this very one thought, that God is the principal agent, kept fresh and on foot in thy mind, will be of sovereign power to cool and beat back any intemperate anger, yea, and make thee say to God with David, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it*, Psal. xxxix. 9. Thus Joseph looked beyond his brethren's barbarous dealing with him, and said, The Lord sent me before you. Thus Job looked beyond the Chaldeans lawless outrages, and said, The Lord hath taken away. Thus David looked beyond Shimei's dogged rancor, and said, The Lord hath bidden him to curse. Thus Jesus Christ himself, blessed for ever, looked beyond the Pharisees, priests, Jews, Judas and the soldiers, to his Father's cup; This cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it? In case of injuries;

injuries; say thus in thyself. This is from God for my good, as sometimes old Eli said, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. 2. Look on man, and make the best construction thou canst of any wrong done by him; if the party that hath wronged thee be a young man, impute it to his rashness, and want of experience; if he be an old man, impute it to his weakness, *senes bis pueri*, old men are twice children; he might do thee wrong, and yet mean thee no harm; if he be a good man, impute it to some mistake, for certainly he would not purposely do thee any evil; if he be a wicked man, impute it to the enmity betwixt the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent; if he do thee harm, say it is no more than thou expected from him. If thus thou wouldst make the best construction of every thing, how mightest thou overcome passion, and procure to thyself a great deal of peace and patience all thy life long?

8. *Take unto you the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*, Ephes. vi. 17. Satan provokes men that they may be provoked, he would have them yield to anger, and then they yield to him; but that you may wrestle and prevail, take up your weapons, have your sword (which is the word of God) in your hands and heart. It is the sword that slays corruptions, and satanical temptations, as David said of Goliath's sword, There is none to that, 1 Sam. xxi. 9. so may we say of the sword of the Spirit, There is none to it. If you ask, how may I furnish myself with this weapon? or how may I cut asunder by this sword this temptation of anger? I answer,

1. Observe the temptation: Satan usually comes in with many motions or objections, and so puts on to wrath, or makes apologies for wrath. Now these in the first place we must observe.

2. Seek out a suitable word, and with that answer him as Christ answered, saying, Avoid Satan, for thus it is written, I shall name two, for they are main points.

Objeſt. 1. Satan in the objects, Yea hath God said, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, Mat. v. 22. Why alas! is it but one sin, and is it not a little one? it may be
thou

thou art passionate, but thou failest only in this; hark but what others say of thee, such a man is a very good man; only he is of an hasty spirit, or such a woman is a very gracious woman, only she is of an hasty spirit. So they say, and so I say, thou mayst be angry, and godly, hasty, and holy, and therefore sin on.

Answ. How? angry and godly? hasty and holy? Surely if this anger be ordinary, constant, and reigning, they are not consistent. Oh what need have I to look to my evidence! the word saith, *They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, Gal. v. 24. And what are those affections and lusts, but among the rest; Hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife? Now if these be not crucified, if these be not in some good measure mortified, how should I be good, or gracious, or godly, or holy? This is certain, when grace comes into the heart it works a change, and a new frame of spirit: The word saith, 'The wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them,' Isa. xi. 6. The meaning is, that furious spirits shall then become meek, and hasty spirits shall then become gentle, grace will tame men; those that were in disposition like wild beasts, and hurtful creatures, shall by his powerful work be metamorphosed and become meek and harmless. And doth Satan tell me, I may be gracious and peevish! Would he flatter me, that a constant, ordinary, reigning, passionate spirit, may consist with the truth of grace? Avoid Satan, for it is written, this lust must be mortified, my lion-like nature must become lamb-like, or I cannot be saved.

Object. But Satan puts into thee another plea, and tells thee, That if thou art angry, thou art thereto provoked, thou could live quietly enough in thy family, and amongst thy neighbours, if thou wert not provoked, it is their fault that provoke thee, and not thine, that thou art thus angry with them.

Answ. How? am I angry? and may be angry, because I am provoked? what a reason is this? I would rather say that God now calls on me for meekness, and not for anger;

ger; any one can be meek, when they are not provoked (as we say, the devil is good when he is well pleased) but if I am provoked, then is the season, if ever, to exercise meekness: The word saith, 'That a godly man is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season,' Psal. i. 3. It is the excellency of grace to work in due season, for then is every thing beautiful; and when is the due season of meekness, but only when I am provoked? or if this be a plea, why might it not be Moses's plea as well as mine? The word saith, 'They angered him at the waters of strife, they provoked his spirit so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips,' Psal. cvi. 33. Meek Moses is now angry, and he was provoked unto it, but that will not excuse him before God; for the word saith, It went ill with Moses for their sakes. God would never be entreated to let him go into the land of Canaan for this very sin; and therefore avoid Satan, for it is written if I am provoked, then is the season for meekness, for if I am provoked to anger, it will go ill with me, as it went ill with Moses, and no provocation will be my excuse.

But Satan hath thousands of pleas, and ten thousands of ways either to put thee into passion, or to justify thee in it. It is impossible for me to instance in all, but against them all I would have thee lay up, and to make use of several scriptures; turn them down in thy book, or learn them by heart (as we say) that thou mayest still have them in readiness; they are such as these: 'Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate. — They that are of a froward heart, are abomination to the Lord, but such as are upright in their way, are his delight. — Cease from anger, and forsake wrath, fret not thyself in any ways to do evil. Ye have heard, it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment and whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. — Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you; with

'with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you,' Prov. viii. 13. and xi. 20. Psalm xxxvii. 8. Mat. v. 21. 22. Eph. iv. 31, 32. Are not these scriptures as so many swords? why then, wield them, and in the use of them cut asunder all temptations of Satan.

9. Set before thee the example of Christ, till thou findest it to work upon, and to change thy Spirit: Christ's example, if rightly eyed and improved, doth not only work morally, but efficaciously, by way of efficiency. It is reported of a noble earl Elstarius, that he had such a quiet spirit, that all wondred, his wife and others asked him, how he came to that meek, humble, and quiet frame. To whom he answered thus, When any one wrongs me, said he, I presently turn my thoughts to the injuries that Jesus Christ suffered, and I never leave off ruminating and remembring the injuries of Christ, until I find my heart wholly quiet. *Learn of me, said Christ; for I am meek.* Mat. xi. 29. Christians, according to the example of Jesus Christ, ought to be meek ones; indeed, meekness is that evangelical grace that Christians ought to imitate Jesus Christ in; and therefore learn of me, saith Christ, set me before you; learn, and never cease learning, till of that fulness that is in me, you receive grace for grace, even meekness for meekness.

10. Pray constantly in this, as in other like cases; pray down the sin of anger, pray for a spirit of meekness, entreat the Lord to quiet and sweeten thy froward nature; pray also for heavenly mindedness, and thou wilt not be disquieted with worldly troubles: As the upper region of the air is not molested with wind, rain, hail, &c. so neither is an heavenly minded Christian, who is lifted up far above these sublunary things, afflicted with them, or perish for them: Pray also for faith, that thou mayst roll thyself upon him and his promises, who hath said, That all things shall work together for their good who love God and are called according to his purpose, Rom. viii. 28. Why then shouldst thou be angry, seeing God will turn the injuries of men into blessings and mercies? 'Let him alone

'alone, and let him curse, it may be the Lord will look on
'thine affliction, and that the Lord will requite good for
'his cursing this day,' 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12. Pray also for
love, which is of more force to restrain thee from revenge
than any injury to provoke thee to anger, for love suffers
long, yea, love suffers all things, 1 Cor. xiii. 3, 7. It will
make thee to look upon him with whom thou art angry as
a brother, and therefore forgive him as thou wouldst have
God to forgive thee; it will make thee to meditate on the
unbounded mercy of God, whose virtues thou must imi-
tate if thou art his child; he forgives thee, and he forgives
thy enemies their many sins, and canst not thou forgive
them? Thou standest in need of infinite mercy to wash a-
way thy many foul offences, and wilt thou not let one drop
of mercy fall upon thy brother to forgive him in some trif-
ling wrongs? O pray for love, and pray for patience, and
pray for the assistance of God's Spirit to mortify thy anger,
and to sanctify thy nature, that thou mayst be serviceable
to God's glory, the good of thy brethren, and the further-
ance of thy own salvation in Jesus Christ.

S E C T. XV.

Of Temptations in respect of our outward Conditions.

HITHERTO of temptations in respect of our natu-
ral dispositions; the next have a respect to our out-
ward conditions. Now thus we are either in prosperity or
adversity; if we are in prosperity, then Satan tempts us to
those sins whereto that state is most subject, as to forgetful-
ness of God, contempt of our poor brethren, love of the
world, pride, &c. If we are in adversity, then he tempts
us to the use of unlawful means for the repairing of our e-
states, or to distrusting in God, or to stealing, defrauding,
murmuring, repining, what not? I cannot insist on all these
particulars, for I intend brevity, only I shall mention one
assault in reference to prosperity, and another as to adver-
sity, and then have done with this head.

S E C T. XVI.

Of Satan's Assaults of Contemning our Brethren.

IF we are in prosperity, it is one assault of Satan, and it
is our common sin to contemn our brethren; the very
case of the Corinthians, who in their love-feasts carried it

so unequally, that one was hungry, to wit, the poor, and another was drunken, to wit, the rich; this made the apostle to ask them, 'What! have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not?' 1 Cor. xi. 21, 22. In the original, *them that are poor*. The very case also of the Christian Jews in general, and therefore saith James in his general epistle to them, 'My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons; for if there come unto your assembly a man with a golden ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, ye have respect to him that weareth the gay cloathing, and ye say to him, Sit thou here in a good place, but ye say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool: Are ye not partial in yourselves, and judges of evil thoughts,' James xii. 3, 4. I shall not deny, but that there is a holy and warrantable respect of persons, in respect of their age, calling, gifts, greatness in the world, but when great reverence is shewed to the rich, and our poor brethren are under contempt, as if they were unworthy our company and converse, when we go so far as to esteem the wicked rich above the godly poor, that when we so debase the godly poor we consider them not at all according to their eminency in grace, and high station in Christianity; but we pass by the appearance of God in them, without any mark or notice; surely this is a sin, and this is a temptation of Satan; can it be of any thing that's ought, that a respect should be had to a worldly lustre rather than to a spiritual grace? That a gold ring should be preferred before a rich faith, doth this favour of Christianity? Or rather doth it not favour of the order of these principalities, and powers, and rulers, and spiritual wickednesses here in my text? I believe devils do thus in opposition to God and his ways; they despise the poor and prefer the rich; but hearken my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom? James ii. 5. God and the devil are as contrary as may be; God hath respect to the lowliness of his handmaidens, he exalteth them of low degree, he filleth the hungry with good

'good things, and the rich he sends away empty,' Luke 11, 48, 49. But Satan prefers wicked worldlings, and accordingly tempts others to exalt, advance and honour them, whilst the godly poor must be neglected, contemned, depressed, and it may be persecuted, because of their outward despicableness; to this sin are they most prone that are great, and rich, and prosper in this world, what care they for the Image of God shining in mean Christians? If they be not of their rank, they will scarce look on them as men, much less as godly, and as David calls them, *The excellent of the earth*, Psal. xvi. 3.

S E C T. XVII.

Of our Wrestling with Satan in this respect.

IF this be one of Satan's stratagems for the up-setting and upholding of his own kingdom, then you whom God hath blessed with outward estates, it concerns you to arm yourselves against this temptation, and to wrestle thus:

1. Own them that fear God, be they never so poor; are they not the glory of God, the treasure of God, the portion of God, the peculiar people of God, and what? are you ashamed of them who are gracious, because they are outwardly mean? What is this but to be ashamed of Christ himself? He was poor in the world, and he preached the gospel to the poor, and he accounts of the poor as his members, and at the last day he will acknowledge that what is done to the poor, it is all one as if done to himself. O then be not ashamed of them, as you would not have Christ to be ashamed of you at the last day; men are willing enough to own their treasure, I must tell you that the godly poor are the church's treasure, and upon that account who would not own them? I remember when Laurence was to suffer martyrdom, the tyrant that persecuted him, understanding him to be a deacon of the church, and so a distributor of the church's riches, he promised to himself a double prey by the apprehension of one single silly soul; thereupon he demanded of Laurence where was the substance of the church; Laurence craving three days respite, he promised to declare to him where the treasure might be had: In the mean time, he caused a number of poor Christians to be gathered together; when the day of

his answer was come, the persecutor strictly charged him to stand to his promise; then valiant Laurence stretching out his arms over the poor, said, These are the precious treasure of the church, these are the treasure indeed, in whom the faith of Christ reigneth, in whom Jesus Christ hath his mansion place: What more precious jewels can Christ have than those in whom he hath promised to dwell? for so it is written, I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me to drink, &c. and look what ye have done to one of these, the same ye have done to me. Indeed this answer vexed the tyrant, but the poor martyr stood to it, tho' he died for it a most cruel death: O do ye own them who are godly poor! now for shame be not you ashamed of them.

2. Close with them, vouchsafe to be much in their society: This was the apostle's rule, *Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate*, Rom. xii. 16. Jerome in his epistle to Pamachius, bade him to equal himself with the poor, and now and then to go into the cells of the needy. I can easily observe how the rich associate themselves with the rich, and many times with the poor or inferior sorts of men, but they are with the most vile, profane, and debauched of all the poor in the country. In the mean time, the godly poor are strangers to them, and strange they must be; unless they will drink, swear, ramble, and applaud them for their kindness and hospitality to all the rabble with whom they converse and live. Alas! this is not the life of Christians, but of heathens. I shall never forget the common saying of a grave, antient, and godly divine in this country, who is now with God, A leg of a lark, said he, is more worth than the whole body of a kite. One poor soul, be it never so poor, if it have but the breathings of God's Spirit in it, he is of more value than a village, or a whole town full of wicked, debauch'd, atheistical boon companions, as we usually call them: God's people (whether poor or no) are the glory of the world, yea, the glory of God himself; but as for others, God speaks of them as dirt and dross, *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross*, Psal. cxix. 119. God's people are usually in scripture called his portion,

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The Lord's portion is his people, Deut. xxxii. 9. His pleasant portion, They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness, Jer. xii. 10. His treasure, his peculiar treasure, Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people, for all the earth is mine, Exod. xix. 5. His glory, the crown of his glory, Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God, Isa. lxii. 3. What! is it thus? are poor saints in such esteem with God, and he looks upon them as his portion, his pleasant portion, his treasure, his peculiar treasure, his glory, the crown of his glory? O then how should you bend yourselves to close with them, and to be much in their society, whose very society is indeed the communion of saints!

3. Delight in them; as those in whom God himself delights. David, tho' a king, could stoop thus far: I believe he was upon the point of charity, when he spake thus of them, but whom did his charity benefit? Not God, but his poor saints. 'O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, my goodness extendeth not unto thee, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight,' Psal. xvi. 2, 3. It seems the poor saints were a king's delight; kings have their delights, and this was all the delight king David had, In them is all my delight. And no wonder, for herein he conformed to God, the poor saints are God's delight; it is God's judgment of men, *That the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, Prov. xii. 26. Hence some observe, that the lion and eagle were not offered in sacrifice to God, but the poor lamb and dove were; great and brave spirits of the world, high as the eagle, and lofty as the lion, God regards them not, but poor humble spirits that are contemptible in the eyes of the world, those are precious to God; he delights in them as in his own darlings. Why thus? do you delight in them, as those in whom God himself delights.

4. Do them good, as the best and chief objects of charity. It is the apostle's advice, 'As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith,' Gal. vi. 10. You see.

War with Devils:

There is an especially put upon them: Let me tell you of a deal of mistaken charity amongst you: You think to do offices of love, or of kindness, or of alms, promiscuously to all is brave, and gets a good report of the country, and the praise of men; and you shall never have the praise of God for this. If you will do any office of love, kindness, alms, or the like, be sure to set an especially on the household of faith. These are they that represent Christ, and indeed are the members of Christ, and stand in Christ's stead; so he will tell you at the last day, 'For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me in, naked, and ye clothed me, sick, and ye visited me, in prison, and ye came unto me.——In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,' Mat. xxv. 35, 36. Mark, those who are Christ's brethren, (which the wicked are not) yea, those who are the least of Christ's brethren, (which the proud, high lofty ones are not) why these are they whom Christ reckons on his own account, so that whatsoever ye do to them, you do it unto him. Oh that this plea of Christ were writ on your doors, that you might better know whom to welcome in, and whom to entertain and do good unto, as you would bid welcome, and give entertainment to Jesus Christ himself.

S E C T. XVIII.

Of the Assaults of Satan to the Use of unlawful Means.

IF ye are in adversity, Satan usually tempts us to the use of unlawful means. Thus when Christ had no ordinary means of getting bread, Satan tempts him to provide for himself by extraordinary. When Esau came out of the field weary, and hungry, and almost dead for want of meat, then sell thy birth-right, said Satan, and so he did. When Peter was in great danger in the high priest's hall, then deny thy master, said Satan, forswear him, and curse thyself. When we are in adversity and in want, then saith Satan, Thou must live, thou must not put forth thy family to beg, thou must utter thy wares, tho' by lying, swearing, exacting, deceiving. Want and necessity is the devil's opportunity to set upon us; fowlers usually set their

their fowes for birds in the winter time, when there is want of food; and therefore prayed Agur, Give me neither poverty nor riches; and why not poverty? Lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of God in vain Prov. xxx. 8, 9. In poverty, temptations are strong to distrust, to steal, lye, swear, or to use ill shifts, and unlawful means. Many a time have I seen a poor professor put to shift, and whilst others censured, I have thought with myself, Ah! poor soul, why should I or any other censure this poor man? little know we the temptations to which he is subject. But to such let me give some counsel.

S E C T. XIX.

Of Wrestling with Satan in this respect.

CONSIDER, that all good things are then beautiful, when they are compassed by good means. Hence the godly man consults ever what is just, not what is gainful; or what may be compassed by honest courses, not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, cozenage, or the like carnal dealings. 'Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right,' Prov. xvi. 8.

2. Consider, that there is no necessity, if ordinary and lawful means fail, to use unlawful; when men say, I must live and maintain my family. Know, it is not absolutely necessary thou shouldst live, but so long as God pleaseth; nay, it is absolutely necessary that thou shouldst rather perish, and not live, than break God's commandments; if thou diest for want of means, thou mayst go to heaven as Lazarus, and exchange a miserable life with an happy; but if to keep thee from dying, thou lovest thy soul, this is to leap out of the frying pan into the fire. Thou hadst better starve, than thro' distress to use unlawful means, and so offend God. Who would wilfully, upon any pretence, run himself into an hot burning oven? O take heed! O for shame, never plead a need or necessity for hell!

3. Consider, that whatsoever is got with ill means, is got with God's anger; and the splitting shipwreck of a good conscience; an hard bargain! This made Solomon say, There is gold, and a multitude of rubies, Prov. xx. 15. which happily may be got in selling or buying by a

false oath or lye; but the lips of truth are a precious jewel. The meaning is, that truth and a good conscience are far more precious than gold or rubies. Oh it is a pitiful exchange, when with the loss of our best jewels, we gain nothing but dung and dross: 'What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' 'Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' Mat. xvi. 26. O the folly to save the nail of thy finger, with the loss of thine eyes! to get a little wealth, and to lose thy God, thy soul, and a good conscience, more worth than worlds. Mr. Perkins relates a story of a good man, who being ready to starve, stole a lamb, and being about to eat of it with his poor children, and as his manner was to crave a blessing, he durst not do it, but fell into a great perplexity of conscience, acknowledged his fault to the owner, and promised restitution if ever God enabled him. In this case, if ever thou repentest, thus will thy conscience smite thee, and if thou never repentest, thy conscience will be as a worm gnawing on thee in hell.

4. Labour to live the life of faith. If lawful means fail, as bread in famine, yet mayst thou feed thyself with faith. Is not this the Psalmist's cure? 'Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed,' Psal. xxxvii. 3. Mark that verily, it is all one with *in truth and faithfulness thou shalt be fed*. A promise well improved, is instead of meat and drink to a hungry soul; the just, in troublesome times, shall live by faith, Heb. x. 38. Did not Abraham thus, when he told his son Isaac, as they were going up to the mount, *My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering*, Gen. xxii. 8. Come, it may be thou art low, and hast scarce bread enough to put into thy mouth, remember that if God speak the word to weak means, they shall work as well as the strong; an hard and dry crust of bread, and a very little, shall be nourishment, both competent and comfortable, never use shifts, if in any of thy wants thou hast not lawful means at hand; *He that believeth will not make haste*, saith the prophet, Isa. xxviii: 16. Christ in his great necessity would not turn stones in-

not to save thy life, but to increase thy wealth, turn stones into bread, yea, into blood, the blood of poor saints, as poor as thyself, by thy oppression and extortion? Rather call to mind God's promise, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' By every word, that is, by every thing which God appoints, and gives power unto to be our nourishment; the Lord would have us live by faith, and to depend on him in the greatest straits, for God is all sufficient.

S E C T. XX.

Of Temptations in respect of our spiritual Estates.

THE next kind of temptation is in reference to our spiritual estates. And herein Satan considers men either as weak Christians or as strong; for the former, he tempts them to errors, despairs, diffidence, blind zeal, &c. for the latter, he tempts them to privy pride, secret hypocrisy, solitary musings on the temptations of Satan, misrepresenting of the Lord's doings, turning the grace of God into wantonness, distractions and wandrings of heart in holy things, to boasting, and exalting their strength of grace, already received, &c. I cannot enumerate all, much less can I enlarge upon all, only I shall speak to one assault of a weak Christian, and another of a strong Christian, and pass all the rest.

S E C T. XXI.

Of Satan's Assaults to bring weak Christians to Errors.

IF Christians are but weak in knowlege, then Satan presents them with some dangerous error, as if it were some precious, glorious truth of God. This Satan doth for these ends: As,

1. To seduce the godly, and to draw them into error. Indeed he cannot seduce them to damnable, yet he may seduce them to dangerous errors, and if he can but prevail in that, he counts it worth the while. Or,

2. If he cannot seduce, yet he will endeavour to unsettle weak Christians in the truth already received. *q. d.* If this be not truth, then mayst thou question every thing for truth, which already thou believest, and where art thou then? Or,

3. Or

3. Or if he cannot unsettle, yet will he labour to shake them in the truth received; all have not attained to the same measure of stedfastness, some are but weak, and babes in knowlege, tho' others are as grown men. Now variety of errors, opinions, and disputes, are a shaking of weak minds, which made the apostle to say, 'Him that is weak in faith receive ye, but not unto doubtful disputation,' Rom. xiv. 1. Or,

4. If he cannot shake them, yet if he can but perplex and trouble them, he hath his end. This hath been Satan's great design in all ages of the church of God, to raise up some impostors, or notable seducers to perplex and trouble the church of God; he hath no comfort himself, and he envies comfort wherever he sees it. Hence he labours, if he cannot seduce us out of the way, yet to hedge up our way with thorns, to cast blocks in our way, to dislurk us in our course towards heaven. Or,

5. He may yet have a further end, he presents error, that if he can do no more, yet he may prejudice the entertainment of further truth. Satan knows full well, that towards the end of the world there will be abundance of the truth revealed and made known. 'The knowlege of the Lord shall be as the waters that cover the sea,' Isa. xlv. 9. God hath spoken glorious things in the latter days. 'Every child shall be as David, and the knowlege of the Lord shall be increased,' Zech. xii. 9. Dan. xii. 4. Now at this time Satan will vent his errors, he will set on foot many dangerous errors, to prejudice the hearts of the people of God in the receiving and entertaining of truths to be revealed. When God is sowing wheat, then is Satan busy to sow his tares; when God is discovering truths, then he is busy to communicate his errors: The devil is never more busy, than when God's work goes best on; He hopes in the heat of the market to vend his own wares, he hopes in the throng to put off one with another, and that men will not so carefully observe it; at least if men be shy to entertain the one, he hopes by this to lessen the authority and to prejudice the entertaining of the other. These are Satan's ends, and no wonder if he prevail with weak Christians, that are yet as babes in knowlege, and know not how resist.

S E C T. XXII.

Of wrestling with Satan as to this Assault.

BUT that you may be armed and able to overcome Satan in this respect, observe these particulars.

1. Be sure of a right knowledge of the principles and fundamental truths. These are the essentials of Christianity, without which no heaven, no salvation: Nor need the ripest Christians contemn this lesson; for principles are of daily use for them, yet they must continually live upon them, as on their bread and drink. The want of this knowledge is the cause of much heresie and apostasy in these distast times; and the not digesting and improving of this knowledge is the cause of much of the hypocrisy, and self-deceiving kind of religiousness that in these times have so prevail'd. Come then, and be well grounded in these fundamentals: You have them in every catechism opened to you, and laid before you; and thus you are likeliest to stand in a time of trial, and to resist Satan in his fiery darts, and to hold fast, and to grow up in the knowledge of the superstructure. It is our misery, and Satan's advantage, that Christians are so earnest about circumstantialia, and neglect the great fundamentals, upon which the eternal being of their precious souls depends.

2. Take heed of spending, or rather mis-spending precious time and thoughts in needless controversies, in doubtful disputations. Satan hath not prevailed in any thing like to this. This causeth siding, and vain names; which administers much fuel to the fire of contention, so much blown up by evil spirits. Oh what strange and strong contests have you usually met with, about church governments? What breaches have been among brethren about matters of discipline? Have they not (like foolish children) thrown dirt in one anothers faces, while the common enemy hath weaken'd and insulted over them all? I am exceedingly taken with those divines, who decline (as much as they may) these needless controversies. It is said of Zachary Ursine, that his enemies troubling him, and crying out against him that he was a Sacramentarian, he so naturally abhorred brawls, and in his judgment so disliked ecclesiastical contentions, that he chose rather to leave Vrat-
slave

slave his native place, and to wander whither the Lord should direct him, that he might live in quiet, and preach necessary practical, saving truth. None are more apt to fall into errors, than they that busie themselves most with unnecessary, curious, circumstantial points. In the differences that have been amongst us about discipline, and ecclesiastical government, it was Mr. Palmer's saying, This is the satisfying stay of my soul. That if discipline had been as necessary as doctrine, the allwise, the all-merciful God would not have left the one in the dark, and revealed the other so clear: And hence he advised all to avoid doubtful disputations; he look'd on them as the design of Satan upon the saints, which he desired to impart unto them, and of which he bad them to beware. Of all the books I ever read about this; I commend that *Irenicum* lately composed by Mr. Stillingfleet.

3. Get an humble heart, and a meek spirit. God is said to reveal his secrets, to babes, Mat. xii. 25. i. e. to the humble and meek. *The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way,* Psal. xxv. 9. God will break his mind to the broken in heart; that is the way to find out any truth in general, and this and that particular point in controversy: You see this in Ezek. xliii. 10, 11. *Thou son of man shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities, and let them measure the pattern; and if they be ashamed of all they have done, then shew them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the going out thereof, and the coming in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the laws thereof.* Oh what contentions have we about the form of government in the house of God! what firing as enemies upon one another, who are all soldiers under the same captain, Christ. This makes some sadly think, that in most disputes and contendings for the truth, men are rather Satans than saints to one another: Rather tempters to sin, than helpers of the graces of each other. O that God would give us humble and meek spirits! O that we would serve one another, bear with one another, and build up one another in holy faith and love! O that we were once ashamed of our doings, and of our iniquities!

Iniquities ! Certainly this were the way to find out the truth of God in every controversy. In this I highly commend Mr. Stillingfleet's spirit : His weapon salve for the church's wounds discovers it clearly.

4. Walk answerable to those manifestations you have, walk in conformity to that measure of truth you have received; and when God sees you faithful in a little, then will he reveal more to you; and when he sees you walk up to the light which he hath made known, then will he reveal his whole mind to you, so far as is necessary for your, salvation. You have a plain scripture for this, *Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded, and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you,* Phil. iii. 15. As many as are perfect, *i. e.* as many as are upright and sincere; or, as many as are perfect, as many as are fully instructed in the essentials of Christianity, and truly strive for Christian perfection; he sets them who have well profited in the knowledge of Christ, against the ruder and more ignorant sort, and they may yet come to more knowledge, only with this caution, ' *Notwithstanding, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Let us walk by the same rule,* ' *i. e.* Let us walk by the word of God, which is the rule of faith and life, not crossing one another in our ways of teaching, or course of life.

5. Be much conversant in reading and hearing the good word of God. This is the way that Jesus Christ directed the quarrelling Jews in; to have satisfaction of him and his mind; *Search the scriptures,* saith he, *for they are they which testify of me,* John v. 39. There is enough in the sacred scriptures to set us all straight, and to keep us from errors, especially in all things necessary for salvation.

But here's an objection; The scriptures are capable of diverse senses, and one holds forth this to be the sense of scripture, another holds that which is the clean contrary, and therefore how should we know which is the right sense and the very meaning of the Holy Ghost?

I answer, God hath not left us without some helps, whereby

whereby we may come to the knowledge of the right fold of scriptures: I shall instance in these.

1. Look upon the scope, the end, the matter, the circumstances, viz. of persons, place, time, together with the antecedents and consequents, and by this means it will neither be difficult to refute many errors, nor to clear many truths.

2. Compare one place with another; it may be in one place the sense is dark, and we do not understand it, be if we'll compare that place which is more dark, with another that is more clear, we shall find the sense of both. Thus, James. ii. 21. seems dark, but compare this with Rom iv. 2. and it is cleared. James speaks of a declarative justification before men, and Paul of a justification in the sight of God.

3. Be sure that our expositions agree with the analogy of faith. This analogy is the constant and perpetual soul of scripture in the clearest places of it; of which sort are articles of faith, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments; whatever is repugnant to these, is false exposition.

4. Consult with others, especially with the comments and expositions of the best, and most orthodox. But in this take heed of tying your faith to men; be content to take in the light of others, but do not shut your own eyes. As there is a public and authoritative judgment of concord and agreement in synods, councils, assemblies; I may call it a ministerial judgment, for councils are not for government, but for unity and communion, and therefore their judgment is a judgment of concord; and as there is a public and authoritative judgment and direction in the pastors and doctors of the church, which may be accompanied with a commanding, as an herald or pursuivant may command in the prince's name, only this is limited to the superior direction of the word of God; so there is a judgment of discerning what is sound doctrine, and this belongs to every Christian singly by himself, and for himself; I may call this a private, rational, self directive judgment, in the court of every man's conscience; of which the apostle speaks, *Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good,*
1 Thes.

1 Thel. 5. 21. *And, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God, yea or no,* 1 John iv. 1. *And, let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind,* Rom. xiv. 5. Certainly every private Christian is to search the scripture, to examine, prove, try, and judge the mind of God; revealed in his word, so far as concerns his own faith and practice. So then part not with this, and yet as means consult with others, and borrow all the light they can afford you, to guide and lead you into truth.

5. Mark if your own inward experience will not prove the best commentary unto you. What? do you doubt of the sense of such or such scriptures, as are really practical, and contain in them necessary truths? Surely they that are sanctified and illuminated by the spirit of grace, will find something within, answerable to that word without, which will clear up the meaning. Hence we say that the book of Canticles, which treats of that spiritual and heavenly fellowship, which the sanctified soul hath with Christ, cannot be thoroughly understood in the true life of it, but by those that are sanctified: Put a carnal man to it, to tell you the sense of such texts as hold forth regeneration, the power of saving faith, the nature of godly sorrow, the sense of God's sweetest mercies in the remission of sins, in his favourable countenance, in communion with Christ, in the testimony of his spirit, as to our adoption, in the whole art of our spiritual warfare; containing the wiles and subtil methods of Satan in tempting, with the admirable power of grace and spiritual wisdom in making resistance and overcoming: Alas! these things are riddles unto him; experience and evidence of them in his own heart he hath none, and therefore it is no wonder if he know not the sense of any such scriptures. But he that is spiritual discerneth all things, he hath the mind of Christ ~~writ on his head,~~ and that work within is his best company.

6. Pray over all: Thus David did, *Open mine eyes* said he, *that I may understand the wonderful things, of thy law,* Psal. cxix. 18. You read and understand not, because you do not pray; if you would profit more, you must pray more; go therefore to him who hath the keys of David, and

and desire him to open, and reveal his mind to you; desire him (who is the Lamb) to unclasp the book, beg him to take the veil from off your hearts, and the seal from off your eyes, that you may understand the wonders of the law, and mysteries of the gospel, you have a promise that you shall be all taught of God, John vi. 45. Turn this promise into a prayer, and desire him who only can teach, that he will teach you: This was David's way *Lead me in thy truth and teach me, shew me thy ways, Lord, teach me thy paths*, Plal. xxv. 4, 5.

It may be you will say, we have been in the use of a these means, and yet we find that the scripture is not easily understood. I confess it is not in many places, and yet in things necessary it is every where plain enough, and where it is not plain enough, if we only use our diligence in the use of means, tho' we do miss the truth, there is no danger? How? No danger? No, (saith Chillingworth) because nothing is necessary to be believed but what is plainly revealed; For to say, that when a place of scripture by reason of ambiguous terms, lies indifferent between divers senses, whereof one is true, and the other false, that God obliges men under pain of damnation not to mistake thro' error and human frailty, is to make God a tyrant, and to say that he requires us certainly to attain that end, for the attaining whereof we have no certain means; which is to say, that like Pharaoh, he gives no straw, and requires brick, that he reaps where he sows not, that he gathers where he straws not, that he will not be pleased with our utmost endeavours to please him, without full, and exact, and never-failing performance, that his will is we should do, what he knows we cannot do; that he will not accept of us according to that which we have, but requireth of us what we have not; which, whether it can consist with his goodness, wisdom, word, I leave it to honest men to judge. Much more might be said to this assault of Satan, but thro' the blessing of God this may suffice.

S E C T. XXIII.

Of Satan's Assaults to bring strong Christians to boast and pride themselves in their own Strength.

IF Christians are strong in grace, then Satan tempts them to boast and pride themselves in their strength of grace already received. Thus he dealt with Peter, when he made that bravado, 'Tho' all should forsake thee yet will not I. And as if this were the great design of the devil in these times, thus he hath dealt with thousands: Not that strong Christians do profess'dly, ordinarily, or in their right mood either boast or pride themselves in their mighty strength; this were not compatible with true grace in any measure; but in the hour of temptation Satan goes far in prevailing with them; and Peter may be an instance how far the saints may yield to the devil in this very sin; and indeed it is rare to find a strong Christian that is not at some time or other puffed up with an overweening conceit of his own abilities. But this assault of pride I have already spoke to. And the general rules of wrestling with it, may well serve to keep down our spirits from boasting or priding ourselves in the strength of grace already received: Only I shall add these few directions more.

S E C T. XXIV.

Of our wrestling with Satan as to this Assault.

CONSIDER, if thou art conceited of thy strength of grace it is the ready way to make thee grow loose and negligent in thy duty; nay, it is well if it bring thee not further; even to a despising of holy ordinances, except that thou hast some more courtly fare than ordinary: Such a pass were the Corinthians come to, Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye reign, like kings without us. One observes well, how the apostle lays the accent of these words on the particule *now*. Now ye are full, *q d.* I knew the time when if Paul had but come to town, and if news had been spread abroad in the city that Paul was to preach you would have flockt to have heard him, and you would have blessed God for a season, but then you were poor and empty; but, 'now ye are full, now ye are rich, now ye reign like kings without us,' 1 Cor. iv. 8. Now ye have got to an higher attainment, Paul is a plain fellow now;

he may carry his chear to an hungry people if he will; but as for your parts, you are well apaid. Thus the apostle speaks by way of an ironical reproof, to make way for his following exhortation to humility, exemplified by himself and his mean condition. And oh, that we had not the like occasion to speak to some, who persuade they want nothing more of our help; who extol themselves above all others, as a king in his kingdom: The worst we wish you is this. I would to God ye did reign in deed and truth; But alas, if once thou art conceited of thy strength, it is to be feared the next news we hear of thee will be sad, either thou wilt be above ordinances, or thou wilt grow loose and negligent in them; we have had woful experience of this.

2. Consider an over-weening conceit of thy own strength of grace, will make thee too bold and presumptuous. Mr. Gurnal tells us, The humble Christian is the wary Christian; he knows his weakness and this makes him afraid, I have a weak head, saith he, I may soon be disputed into an error, and heresy, and therefore I dare not come where such stuff is broached, lest my weak head should be intoxicated. On the other side, the confident man he'll sip of every cup, he fears no poison, he is so established in the truth, that the whole team of heretics shall not draw him aside. I have a vain light heart, saith the humble soul, I dare not come among wicked debauch'd company, lest I should bring the naughty man home with me: But one conceited of the strength of his grace, dares venture into the devil's quarters; as Peter into the rout of Christ's enemies, and how he came off you know; there his faith had been slain on the place had not Christ sounded a retreat by the seasonable look of love he gave him. It was a bold speech of Mr. Clapham, and yet a good man, as my author saith, If Clapham die of the plague, say Clapham had no faith; and this made him boldly go among the infected.

3. Consider, a conceit of thy strength of grace will make thee cruel to thy weak brethren in their infirmities; and surely this sin least becomes a Saint; it is the apostle's counsel, 'If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are
' spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness:

' but

* But how shall a soul get such a meek spirit? It follows, * Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted,' Gal. vi. 1. Why are men so sharp in their censures, but because they trust too much to their grace, as if they could never fall? It was otherwise with Bernard, who when he heard of any scandalous sin of a professor, *hodie illi, cras mihi*, would he say, He fell to-day, and I may stumble to-morrow.

4. Turn the eye from the fruitless and dangerous speculation of thy own worthiness, and fasten it a while upon thy corruptions and infirmities, upon thy many deficiencies in religious duties, wants and weaknesses in prayer, omissions of occasions for the enlarging of the kingdom of Christ, fear of the vain and wretched imputation of worldlings, and from this consideration thou wilt be so far from self-conceitdness of thy own gifts and graces, that thou wilt find much matter, and just cause to renew thy repentance, to continue thy humiliation, and to stand unto thy guard against this spiritual pride.

5. Consider the strongest Christian hath not his strength in himself, but only in Christ; * I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,' Gal. ii. 20. As all the myrrhe, and odours, and instruments of Esther's purification, and all her rich and costly apparel, * were given out of the king's house, and the royal crown was put upon her head by the king's own hand,' Esther ii. 15, 17. So all the purity and perfection, all the righteousness and holiness, all the dignity and excellency of an holy gracious soul is drawn from Christ; he, and only he is the root by whom the Christian is sustained, the spring by whom the Christian is replenished, the sun, by whom the Christian is enlightened, the garment by whom the Christian is clad and covered; whatsoever goodness, grace, or excellency is in a Christian, it is Christ's, and not his own; and this Paul was willing to acknowledge; he was not ashamed (saith one wittily) to let the world know, that Christ carried his purse for him, * Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.' Yea, after many years trading, this holy man sees nothing he had got, * I count not myself to have apprehended; he is still pressing forward, I press towards the

mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ, Phil. iii. 13, 14. How then is it, that the strongest Christian be he never so strong, should have high thoughts, and an arrogant opinion of himself? What is this but to rob God of his glory; and Christ of his grace? Mayest thou not say of every dram of grace, as the young man of his hatchet, Alas master, it was borrowed. Oh! why shouldst thou be lifted up on this account? Shall the dunghill because the sun shines on it? Shall the Christian admire himself, because the sun of righteousness hath shined on him? Oh! God forbid.

6. Consider, the stronger thou art in grace, the more humbly and submissively shouldst thou carry thyself; the old rule of *quanto doctior* may well here take place, *quanto sanctior es, tanto te geras submissus*: By how much the more holy, by so much the more lowly. Was not Christ the fairest of all the children of men (grace being eminently poured into him) an humbled Christ? and may we not thence learn, that the highest excellency, and the greatest humility, may consist together? Many think, that to be lowly and humble, would argue too mean and abject a spirit for a strong Christian, but was ever spirit so truly heroical, and so eminently gracious as Christ's Spirit? And yet never was such an humble lowly spirit in this world; men are mistaken in this thing, for a proud spirit, is the base spirit, an humble spirit is the raised spirit; humility is the grace that puts a varnish, lustre, beauty and glory on all other graces; therefore saith the apostle to strong Christians. *Be clothed with humility*, 1 Pet. v. 5. The propriety of the word signifies, a cloathing or dressing with ribbons, with fine beautiful ornaments; it is the beautiful ornament of a Christian, and of all the graces of a Christian, it puts off grace, it graceth all graces whatsoever; and therefore by how much the more holy, by so much the more humbly shouldst thou carry thyself.

7. Consider the strength of the strongest Christian growed suitable to his strength in humility; if he be humbled, this makes him profitable under afflictions, as the vine under the hand of the pruner dressing it; this makes him capable

pable of the word of God, as the broken ground is of seed, and the empty vessel is of water; this makes Christ very welcome and amiable in the eye of the soul, the fairest of ten thousands; this disposeth man to every duty, makes the yoke of Christ very easy, the soul never thrives more than when it is humble under the strength which God hath given it; 'he fills the hungry with good things;' but on the other side, if thy heart begin to swell, it is time for God to withhold the infusions of his grace; for all that is poured on such a soul, runs over into self-applauding, and is good for nothing: a proud heart and a lofty mountain are never fruitful; such an one goes backward and not forward, he spends on the old stock, and drives no trade at present to bring in more. O the difference betwixt a christian humble and one grown proud and insolent! When humble he prayed in the sense of his own weakness to get strength, but when proud he prays to shew his strength, that others may admire him. And O the justice, if Hezekiah-like, he once call in spectators to see his treasure, that God takes away his treasure! Indeed if God love him, he may well take that away from him, which takes away his heart from God, and so make him humble, that he may become more strong.

S E C T. XXV.

Of Satan's injections by himself.

SATAN's next assaults we call injections, which are only and immediately by himself: these usually are Satan's reserves; when his other assaults prove unsuccessful, then he opens his quiver, and sends a shower of these arrows to set the soul on flame, if not of sin, yet of terror and horror. These injections are *terribilia de fide, horribilia de Divinitate, terrible things of faith, and horrible things concerning God*; we may call them blasphemies, blasphemous thoughts, which the devil throws into the fantasy, infinitely against our wills, and by which he sets all within on fire; they are shot in like thunder-bolts, as thick and quick as can be imagined, and they cause trembling, even to flesh as well as spirit, seeing there is neither pleasure nor profit in them, but a fearful expectation of speedy vengeance. But you may wonder, are ever Chri-

stians, professors, saints, troubled with such assaults as these? I answer, Yes, the most holy hearts are many times most haunted with these horrors. It was blessed Bolton's saying, 'That strangers to the ways of God are not much troubled in this kind, or ordinarily vexed with such horrors; Satan makes as much of his in this world as possibly he can, knowing that he hath time enough, after eternity itself, to torment them in the world to come; and therefore he is not wont to wield this terrifying weapon against them, save only at some dead lift, or upon some special advantage, as under some extraordinary misery, or in excess of melancholly, to drive them thereby to distraction or despair, or to hinder conversion, by a diversion into by ways. But sure I am, saith he, the ordinary object and special aim of Satan's malice in this point, are only those who have happily escaped out of his clutches already, and are fully and for ever freed from his damning fury, and all deadly hurt.' And I know not whether there be any of these, which do not less or more, at one time or other, suffer under this horror: and yet every one of them thinks himself singular in this suffering, and that it is not usual for God's children, to have such prodigiously foul and fearful thoughts put into their heads which they dare not mention for their abhorred monstrousness, neither think of at any time without trembling. I remember I was sometimes told at a lecture set up at London, against the Jewish religion, and for the conversion of that people, holy Mr. Vines preaching his turn, he argued strongly against the Jews in their horrid blasphemies of Jesus Christ. In conclusion of his sermon he seemed to recollect himself, saying but to whom preach I? To Jews or Christians? If none be here but Christians, to what purpose should I prove these Jewish blasphemies. Ah, said he, have Christians no need of such sermons? Are not Christians sometimes troubled with Satan's injections of this nature against the divinity of Jesus Christ? Alas! for my own part, I know not how to clear myself, but that I tell you, I would kiss the feet of him that would bring me these glad tidings, that I should never more be troubled with these injections, that Jesus

Christ

Christ is not the Messiah, or that Jesus Christ is not God. The congregation being very throng, and hearing this, they gave out a groan, as if it had run through the congregation, and had been the groan only of one man; the re-lator being present, and affected with it, he told me, he supposed the meaning of that groan was this, *q. d.* If thou that speakest, a knowing, godly divine art afraid of these blasphemies, how much more may we?

S E C T. XXVI.

Of our wrestling with Satan as to this Assault.

IN this case that we may prevail against Satan, let us learn these lessons. As,

1. Let us learn (or at least endeavour it) that we may distinguish Satan's injections, and those temptations arising from our own heart. Certainly there is a difference, if we could but know, betwixt those fire balls which are thrown in at our windows by Satan, and those sparks of corruption which fly, as it were, from our own heart, and take fire at our own sinful hearts. These differences are not agreed on by all, and yet some inward powerful, spiritual men, Gurnal, Arrowsmith, lay them down thus.

1. They may be differenced by the time when they begin to stir. All the while a man is a stranger to God and Christ, he is not troubled with such blasphemies, or at least he is not ordinarily assaulted in this manner; but when once the work of conversion hath newly passed, or is now passing upon the man, when he is coming out of nature to grace, and declares for Jesus Christ against sin and Satan, then is the time when ordinarily these blasphemous suggestions begin to make their apparition, and these vermin are seen to crawl in the Christian's bosom; a strong probability that they do not breed there, but are sent by Satan, in a way of revenge for the soul's revolt from him.

2. They may be differenced by the manner how these blasphemies arise in Christians thoughts; Satan's injections are usually violent and sudden, they come like lightning flashing into the Christian's thoughts before he hath time to deliberate with himself what he is doing; whereas that lust which is the ebullition of our own hearts is ordinar-

ly gradual in its motion, it moves in a way more still and suitable to nature, it enticeth the soul, and by degrees slightly inveigles it into a consent.

3. They may be differenced by the effects; for Satan's injections usually have a dismal horror and consternation on the Christian's spirit which reacheth often to the discomposure of the body; whereas that lust which is our own useth to please us better. We naturally like the conceptions of our own mind, as we naturally love the children of our own loins.

I know some others approve not of those differences for neither the time nor their violence, nor their suddenness, nor their independency (which some also make a difference) nor their horror, nor their unnatural consternation, or terror, are so proper to Satan's injections, as that our lusts may not partake of all these accidents. To say that our lusts may not push on a sudden, or to be independent, or that they may not be unnatural or terrible, is hard, saith Mr. Capel. These differences therefore we lay down but as topical, and not as demonstrative. It were happy, if it could be absolutely resolved, that all our blasphemous thoughts were injections of Satan, and not from our lusts, for then we might say, they were Satan's sins, not ours, so long as we are passive, and not active in them. And therefore I see no reason but we may study the point, though it be a work too hard for most men to find out.

2. Let us beat them back so well as we may, let us never consent, or approve of them, and we are safe. This may comfort us, whether they come from Satan or ourselves, and upon this ground some would not have us perplex ourselves too much with needless queries, which thoughts be Satan's and which be ours, for if we reject them, whether they come from him or us, they are not at all imputed to us. The rule runs thus; that only is ours, which we accept and assent unto; when I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, saith Paul, Rom. vii. 20. therefore no more is imputed by God, than is seen and allowed by us; if it come from Satan it is no sin of ours at all; if it come from our lusts, sin it is materially

ally, but not formally, for the guilt is done away in that we do not allow it. John Climachus tells a story of one, who being assaulted with a spirit of blasphemy, for twenty years, he wrote a letter to a good old man of his sad condition, the matter sifted, and found out that the poor monk had been long assaulted, but during that time, had prayed and fasted, was sensible of it, but never had consented to it; the old saint fell a laughing, and coming to the tempted person, whom he found grovelling on the ground, Come, said he stand up, and lay thy hand upon my head, which when he had done, thy sin, said the old soldier of Christ, be upon me, for the time to come; which no sooner said, but the sickly tempted man grew healthy and strong, his disease both chronic and acute, immediately vanished, his mind was settled, and Satan avoided. It is the concurrent judgment of our best divines that blasphemous thoughts resisted, and not consented unto, are not our sins, but our crosses: or suppose there be any tainture on our parts, yet condemning them in our judgments, and abhorring them in our hearts, Christ's precious blood takes away the venom of all. It was good divinity, though but ill poetry, *Tentans non ladit, nisi cum tentatus obedit.*

3. Let us not dispute or reason the case with Satan, but at the very first approach bid Satan avoid. Thus Christ did, when Satan tempted him to fall down and worship him, avoid Satan, saith Christ. The devil is an old sophister, of above five thousand years standing, in the school of hideous temptations, and hellish policies; and we are but novices of yesterday, and but a little acquainted with his methods, devices and depths; and therefore if we will debate this matter with the devil, we may be more and more confounded; surely it is better to bid Satan avant, instead of disputing, there should be loathing, our hearts within us should rise at the injection, and throw it away with detestation, as Christ did; and then will Satan depart, at least for a season, as he did from Christ.

4. During the hour and power of darkness, avoid solituness and desert places; there Satan hath the greatest advantage

advantage for all his assaults. Is not this the meaning of the preacher? 'Two are better than one, and wo ~~to~~ to him that is alone, if he fall, he hath none to help him up,' Eccl. iv. 9. When Christ was to be tempted of the devil, *the Spirit led him into the wilderness*, Mat. iv. 1. And why into the wilderness, but that Satan might have all the advantage against him, in respect of the place? Indeed no place is free from Satan's temptations; Lot was caught in a cave, David on his house, Adam in paradise. We see how busy Satan is with us in our public assemblies; yet of all places none so fit for the devil as solitary places; 'When he is gone out of a man, he walketh *thro* dry, or solitary places,' Mat. xii. 43. and while he is in a man, by way of possession, he carries him *into the wilderness*, or solitary places, Luke viii. 29. When did Satan assault Eve, but when she was alone! When did he assault David, but being alone on his gallery? When Lot's daughters, but when they were alone in the cave! He is a prince of darkness, and therefore passeth all his exploits in as much darkness, secrecy, and silence as he can. I might instance in others; but give me leave to speak a little of my own experience in this kind; much of my time have I spent in eminently famous and public places, but at last weary of those hurries, jars, envies, pride, discords and policies of men in streets and towns, I resolved to spend the remainder of my time, for the most part, in the silent gardens, fields and woods; there sometimes I was taken with the various tunes of melodious birds, and occasionally they have lifted up my heart, in spiritual songs, and psalms, and hymns. But alas! I find these places are no freer from temptations of another sort, and especially his most hideous and horrible injections in such places more than public. And this more resolves me than all the arguments ever I read, of the error of those hermits and votaries of old who, to free themselves from Satan's malice, and for more holiness, voluntarily forsook the societies of men, and lived by themselves in woods, and wildernesses. And yet is there no mean betwixt these two extremes? is not society good? and is not solitariness good in their times and seasons? I dare

not for a world deny either, and I think he is no Christian that makes not use of both : hence I say, that in the very time of the assaults, or of Satan's injections, it is good to avoid solitariness as of choice : yet if God by virtue of our calling, shall draw or lead us into solitary places at such a time, we need not fear : ' Jesus Christ was led of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil,' Mat. iv. 1. If we are led into a wilderness by a divine providence, and in our calling, and that we run not ourselves rashly into a temptation, we may confidently expect a comfortable issue out of it : but herein we had need of caution and direction.

1. For caution : Beware that in solitary places we yield not to roving, ranging thoughts ; the time there spent must not be unprofitably spent. Indeed the heart is a wandering thing, like a mill ever grinding, ever in motion ; take heed then, watch over it, give it no leave to muse unprofitably.

2. For direction : carry we ourselves so in solitary places that we may say with Scipio, we are never less alone, than when we are alone ; or rather with Christ, *I am not alone, for the Father is with me*, John xvi. 30. There is a sweet liberty (when we are solitary) of conversing with God, there we may make our addresses to him, and sharpen our prayers, and meditate on him, and on his word and works. And thus in a wilderness we may have safety, for as the hills compass Jerusalem, so doth the Lord compass his people while they are in his service.

3. We must have a care to avoid idleness. Holy exercises, and the duties of our lawful callings should then be our work. For holy exercises, I commend conferences with others ; to ask counsel, and to acquiesce in counsel well given, is a present cure. Prayer also is a duty taught us by Christ, *Lord suffer me not to be led into temptation*, q. d. Lord rebuke Satan, and restrain his malice, that either he may not cast his hellish wild fire of blasphemous thoughts into our minds, or at least that they may be quenched at their first entrance, and not inflame our concupiscence with the least liking of them. And for our particular callings, follow them with all diligence, by this means

means we shall have no leisure to hearken to Satan, and in them seasonably we may serve God our Father, as well as in our general callings.

4. If for all this we cannot be rid of these sad injections, beawe not therefore over much grieved, but seeing they are Satan's sins and not ours let them pass as they come, without any great trouble. Some of bold spirits tell us, that in this case we may deride Satan, not haughtily, but holily, as if we should say, 'Sir, Satan, thou unclean spirit, if thou couldst do me any greater mischief, I know thou wouldst do it, but I regard thee not, for I call on God as my helper against all thy assaults.' The proud devil cannot endure himself to be condemned, and this holy contempt of Satan hath proved the cure of some poor tempted souls, as Gerson affirms.

C H A P. V. S E C T. I.

Of the Devil's furious Assaults in the End and Period of our Life.

THE fourth and last period wherein Satan assaults or combats with us, it is the end and period of our life, and in prosecution of this first let us learn some of those depths or wiles of Satan against us, and then practise we those duties that concern us in our wrestling with him at such a time.

His assaults are usually sharpest then; thus Bolton tells us, 'Amidst the variety of Satan's methods, he is for the most part constant in one piece of policy, and that is this, he conceals his greatest fury, in his most desperate assaults unto the last; he reserves his fieriest dart, his deadliest poison, his sharpest sling, until he meet us on our death-bed.' Another of our worthies agrees with him, as evil spirits are ever busy and restless in their assaults, so their last conflict uses to be most vehement, whether it be for that now the soul is passing out of their reach, or whether it be for that the painful agonies of death yield them more hopes of advantage, since the soul whiles it is struggling with those last pangs, must needs have her powers distracted in her resistances. Cruelty where it would prevail, will be sure to lay the most load upon the weaker.' I have often wondered why all the saints are not then more troubled;

troubled; some we see pass out of the world without any molestation, but it is not for want of Satan's will, God hath him in a chain, and rebukes Satan, and the holy angels guard the saints and keep off devils, otherwise I believe not one should pass out of this world, but Satan would assault him with all his fiery darts; yet as he tempts all in life, so it is the Lord's pleasure that in death he should have a liberty to fall on some, and them he assaults with his fieriest dart, his deadliest poison, his sharpest sting indeed; and of some of these I shall speak.

S E C T. II.

Of the several Assaults of Satan at our Death.

BUT what are those deadly machinations which the devil useth at this time? Here we are at a stand; alas! we know not the secret projects of silly men like ourselves, much less can we attain unto the understanding of all the infernal plots of subtil devils, such knowledge is too wonderful for us, our clew hath not line enough to fathom these depths of Satan, yet (as good Hall observeth) 'Though we be not able to discern those infinite and hidden particularities of diabolical arts, yet our woful experience and observation hath taught us some general heads of these mischievous practices.' I cannot say, I can tell you any of their assaults at such a time by my own experience, for I have not yet passed those pikes and pangs of death, yet may I bring in the experiences of others, and so guess at the variety of Satan's assaults at the point of death. For instance, some he moves to an ungrounded confidence in God, others to a distrust, where they have sure grounds of a true belief, some he works to a spiritual pride, and over-weening opinion, others to a dejection of mind, so that they cry, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul?' Into some he throws many needless scruples, affrighting them even from lawful actions; into others he darts presumptuous thoughts, that nothing startles them, be it never so wicked; some he lifts up in the good opinion of their graces or gracious dispositions; others he beats down with a disparagement of the true graces planted in them by God's own Spirit; some he feeds with a sweet contentment of their own righteousness

reousness and gracious actings; others he endeavours to freeze up with a dulness and deadness in all their duties; some he flatters with an unfallible assurance of this happy condition; and of their election into glory, others he tempts to a careless indifferency, and stupid neglect of their future estate; some he objects against, 'in that the measure of their sorrow and contrition is unsufficient; or others he persuades, that the smallest portion of inward sorrow for sin, without any the least outward concern against it, is enough; into some he throws flashes of hell fire, and presents death to them as the king of terrors; others he turns into stocks and stones, so that, they mind neither death, nor judgment, nor heaven, nor hell, nor any thing of that eternity that is before them. But because I speak only of believers, and their assaults, this I observe, 'That most what he either tempts to presumption or despair, either he puffs up poor souls with some ungrounded presumptions of present safety and future glory, or he casts undue and unjust fears into the consciences of them that are most tender and weak;' and therefore passing by all the rest, I shall take notice only of these two assaults, and give directions how to wrestle against them.

S E C T. III.

Of the Assaults of Presumption.

1. **I**F Satan takes this course to tempt us to presumption, it is usually on this principle, 'That our lives have been holy, that we have walked before God in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in his sight.' I will not deny but that this may be done: Hezekiah is not condemned, but commended in this very saying: our duties, and graces, and gracious actings, as to the matter of sanctification, are precious metal, and as they have the image of Christ upon them, and for them we may bless the name of God; but as to the matter of justification, we are to renounce all; and as to the matter of sanctification we are to attribute the strength, the power, and the glory of all unto Jesus Christ, and nothing to ourselves, if either we trust to them, or pride ourselves in the exercise of them on our dying

ding beds, it is Satan's temptation, and we had need to look to it, and avoid it.

S E C T. IV.

Of our wrestling with Satan in this respect.

W H I C H that we may, let us observe these rules.

1. Consider, whatsoever good we have done or howsoever holy we have been, it was not of ourselves, but of the free gift and grace of God in Christ: 'What have we that we have not received? And if we have received it, why do we glory as if we had not received it?' 1 Cor. iv. 7. It is storied of Mr. Knox, that the night before his death, he slept some hours with great unquietness, often sighing and groaning, whereupon when he awaked, the standers by asked him how he did, and what it was that made him mourn so heavily? To whom he answered, 'In my lifetime I have been assaulted with temptations from Satan, and he hath oft cast my sins into my teeth to drive me to despair, yet God gave me strength to overcome all his temptations: but now the subtil serpent takes another course, and seeks to persuade me, that all my labours in the ministry, and the fidelity I have shewed in that service hath merited heaven and immortality; but blessed be God that hath brought into my mind these scriptures; 'what hast thou that thou hast not received? And not I, but the grace of God in me,' &c. With which he is gone away ashamed, and shall no more return. And now I am sure my battle is at an end, and that without pain of body or trouble of spirit, I shall suddenly change this mortal and miserable life, with that happy and immortal life that shall never have an end.' Oh that thus it may be with us, that God's grace may be all, and we may be nothing; 'We are not sufficient of ourselves to think as of ourselves, but all our sufficiency is of God,' 2 Cor. iii. 5.

2. Rest not on any thing on this side Jesus Christ; neither grace, nor duties, nor holiness, are to be trusted upon: it is true, we must hold them fast, in point of practice and obedience, but it is our sin and danger to hold them fast in reliance and confidence; do them we must, but glory in them we must not; we may remember

ber on our death beds what we have done, and how holily we have been in obedience to God, and by the grace of Christ; yea, we may go further, and desire God to remember us concerning them, Neh. xiii. 22. 'Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.' Nehemiah had done many good offices to the church of God, and he desires God to remember him in respect of them, 'Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all I have done for this people,' Neh. v. 16. Yet we are not to boast of them, to trust in them, or expect a reward of them, it is not *propter*, but *secundum*, not 'for all I have done, but according to all I have done.' As Christ will reward his saints 'according to their works,' Matth. xvi. 27. So Nehemiah prays, 'Lord think upon me according to all I have done, as being the best witness of my inward righteousness, but not 'what I have done,' as if I should merit heaven by my just deservings. Our Saviour tells us, 'When we have done all we can do, that still we must say, we are but unprofitable servants,' Luke xvii 10. How? unprofitable; this title is given to evil servants, 'Cast ye the unprofitable servant into utter darkness, Matth. xxv. 30. And they are unprofitable, 'there is none that doth good, no, not one,' Rom. iii. 12. Certainly this shews what our merits are, if God should be severe, 'Can a man be profitable unto God? 'If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he at thy hand?' Job xxi. 2. Take heed then of resting on, or trusting to any righteousness or works of thy own, they are no cause of heaven, and therefore not to be confided in.

3. Rely we ourselves on Christ, and Christ alone for life and salvation. Bellarmine could say, after all his disputes for relying on works, on saints, or angels, *Tutus est*, &c. 'The safest way is to rely on Jesus Christ; works, saints, and angels, may be some comfort in their way, and at the time of death.' I would have an especial eye to angel protection, of which afterwards; yet I must needs say, that faith is not content with the presence and assistance of an angel, except the Lord Jesus Christ be there himself.

himself. When God promised to send an angel with his people to drive out the Canaanites, 'the Israelites mourned, and no man put on his ornaments,' *Exod. xxxiii. 4.* They put on blacks, like a loving wife that would have her husband: what do you tell her of sending a trusty servant with her? Nothing will content her but her husband: so when our faith is set on work, it makes us but sick to tell us of an angel, except we may have Christ Jesus also, him or none, he is our righteousness, and he will be sure to be our strength: 'At what time I am afraid, saith David, I will trust in thee,' *Psal. lvii. 3.* Indeed all the saints are taught the same lesson, to renounce their own righteousness, and to expect all from the pure mercy of God in Christ, which act of faith is so pleasing to God, that such a soul shall never be ashamed. A heathen could say, when a bird scared by an hawk flew into his bosom, 'I will not betray thee unto thy enemy, seeing thou comest for sanctuary unto me;' How much less will God yield up a soul unto its enemy, when it takes sanctuary in his name, saying, 'Lord, I am troubled with such and such a temptation, but I trust in thee, I rest upon thee for life and for salvation: O take me into the bosom of thy love for Christ's sake! O cast me into the arms of thy everlasting strength! I have no confidence in myself, or any other, into thy hands I commit my cause, my life, my soul, or whether I live or die, here will I stick, and here will I abide for ever.' Oh blessed soul, that thus avoids Satan, and rolls itself on Christ, and Christ alone for its eternal happiness.

S E C T. V.

Of the Assault of Despair.

BUT Satan (it may be) takes another course, if men will not presume, he endeavours with might and main to drive them to despair; this is the gulph that swallows up souls, and therefore Satan makes sure, if he can but prevail in this assault; and to that end, he sets before their eyes all the gross sins which ever they committed, and all the judgments which those sins have deserved; these he writes (as it were) on the curtains of their beds, and endeavours as much as he can to keep their eyes upon them;

them, *q. d.* Read here the bloody characters of thy sin, *peruse the greatness, the multitude, the heinousness of thy transgressions, the word is, that no unclean thing shall enter into the kingdom of God.* Rev. xxi. 27. and canst thou hope with all thy sins to pass thro' those golden gates? there shall in nowise enter into them any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; and standest not thou guilty of all these sins? What hope then to enter thro' those gates into the city; Come, despair and die, expect nothing but the wrath of the judge, and the wages of sin, *viz.* Death eternal, both of body and soul.

Thus Satan tempts, he knows that he must now or never prevail, for if their souls once go to heaven, he shall never vex nor trouble them any more.

S E C T. VI.

Of our wrestling with Satan as to this last Assault.

TO this last assault of despair, I have spoken before in Chap. III. Sect. V. which in this case may be reviewed; yet a few considerations I shall add here, and then I have done.

1. Consider, it is as easy with God, upon true repentance to forgive the greatest sin as the least, and he is as willing to forgive many, as to pardon one, and his mercy shineth more in pardoning great sinners than small offenders; as appears in the examples of Manasses, Magdalen, Peter, Paul, &c. *Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound, and where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,* Rom. v. 20. O blessed word!

2. Consider, that Christ is the remedy appointed by God the Father to save sinful souls; if then Satan tells us we are miserable sinners, and must despair, we may answer, *Christ came into the world to save sinners,* Mat. ix. 13. Isa. liii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 21. Thus blessed Mrs. Katharine Stubbs wrestled with Satan, as appears in that dialogue: How now Satan, what makest thou here? art thou come to tempt the Lord's servant? I tell thee thou hell-hound, thou hast no part nor portion in me, nor by the grace of God ever shall have; I was, now am, and shall be the Lord's for ever; yea Satan, I was chosen an elect of

Christ unto everlasting salvation, before the foundation of the world was laid, and therefore thou must get thee packing, thou damned dog. But what dost thou lay to my charge thou foul fiend? Ah that I am a sinner, and therefore shall be damned! I confels indeed that I am a sinner, and a grievous sinner, both by original sin, and by actual sin, and that I may thank thee for; and therefore Satan, I bequeath my sin to thee, from whence it first came, and I appeal to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus; Christ came to save sinners (as he himself saith) and not the righteous: Behold the Lamb of God, saith John, that taketh away the sins of the world; the blood of Jesus Christ, doth cleanse us from all sins. And therefore I constantly believe my sins are washed away in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and shall never be imputed to me any more. But what sayest thou now Satan? dost thou ask me how I dare come for mercy? I tell thee Satan, I am bold to come unto him thro' Christ, being assured and certain of pardon and remission of all my sins for his name's Sake: For doth not the Lord bid all heavy laden with the burden of sin to come to him and he will ease them; Christ's arms were spread wide open upon the cross, to embrace me and all penitent sinners, and therefore I will not fear to present myself before his footstool, in full assurance of his mercy for Christ's sake: What more Satan? dost thou say, it is written, That God will reward every one according to his deserts? So it is written again, thou deceitful devil, that Christ's righteousness is my righteousness, his works my works, his merits my merits, and his precious blood a full satisfaction for my sins: Q but God is a just God (thou sayest) and therefore in justice must needs condemn me: I grant Satan, that he is a just God, and therefore he cannot in justice punish me for my sins, which he hath already punished in his own Son; it is against the law of justice to punish one fault twice; I was, and am a great debtor unto God the Father, but Jesus Christ hath paid the debt for me, and therefore it stands not with the justice of God to require it again; and therefore avoid Satan, avoid thou fire-brand of hell, and tempt me no more, for he that is with me is mightier than thou,

even the mighty and victorious lion of the tribe of Juda, who hath bruised thy head, and hath promised to be with his children to the end of the world: Avoid therefore thou Dastard, remove thy siege, and yield the field won, and get thee packing. or I will call upon my grand Captain Jesus Christ, the valiant Michael who beat thee in heaven, and threw thee down to hell, with all thy bellish train, and devilish crew. — She had scarcely pronounced these last words, but she fell suddenly into a sweet smiling laughter, saying, Now he is gone, now he is gone, do you not see him fly like a coward, and run away like a beaten cock? he hath lost the field, and I have won the victory, even the garland and crown of everlasting life, not by my own power and strength, but by the power and might of Jesus Christ.

3. Peruse the evidences which in former times we have gathered and kept for such a time as this; have not many saints avoided Satan thus, and got the victory? I shall instance in that one recorded in Mr. Calamy's ark, who reports of her thus, I knew, saith he, a very godly woman, who in her life time had taken a great deal of pains to compose and write down her evidences for heaven, and who also kept a diary of her life, and wrote down how she spent every day, it pleased God to withdraw himself from her for a while, and to let the devil loose, who tempted her to despair, told her she was an hypocrite, and formalist, and had no true grace in her; she sent for me, made her bitter complaint to me, and sadly bewailed her condition; then she told me (which before I knew not) how she had spent her life, how careful she had been in searching her ways, in observing how she spent every day, and how exact in collecting evidences for heaven: the book was sent for, I read a great deal of it to her, and took much delight and content in what I read, and it pleased God to come to her with comfort in the reading of it; she shewed her staff and her bracelets, and thereby quenched the fiery darts of the devil.

4. Improve the comforts and precious promises which are most suitable to our conditions; I shall instance in these: — 'Behold Satan hath desired to have you, that
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'he might sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.—For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them only, triumphing over them upon the cross and so through death hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, that he might deliver all them which through fear of death, were all their life subject to bondage.—And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.—The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time,' Luke xxii. 31. Rom. viii. 36. Heb. ii. 14. Rom. xvi. 20. Rev. xii. 12. His rage is greatest, when his time is shortest, even as darkness is greatest a little before day, but this is a sign that a calm is at hand; the devil's grand temptations, are messengers of his retiring, as when the strength of an enemy is wasted, he will make one or two furious assaults against the castle, and then he raiseth the siege: and is not this the voice of Christ, 'Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' Mat. xi. 28. Sooner must God deny himself, or disrobe himself of the brightest beam of his glory, and of the fairest flower in his garland of majesty, which is his mercy, before he deny pardon of sin to the truly penitent. Thou sayest thy sins are as black as hell, as red as blood, as foul as Sodom, yet saith Christ, *Come and welcome*. But above all others, methinks there is one promise which above all others is able to put life and fresh vigour in the most despairing soul: 'Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts,' Isa. lv. 7, 8, 9. Thus

the Lord draws his people to the fountains of grace, and drives them from despair, by a consideration of his transcendent and unlimited mercies: it seems they had reasoned thus, we have been so wretched and rebellious, that there is no returning unto him, there is no hope of pardon: what, faith God, will you measure my mercy by your mercy? Why, there is as great odds between my ways and your ways, and my thoughts and your thoughts, *i. e.* Between my mercy and your conceits of my mercy, as there is distance between heaven and earth. O golden promises!

5. Pray earnestly, that now the Lord may break in and help us by the power of his might. This was the way of the saints of old. The holy sister of Basil, and Melania, whom Jerome magnifies for their sanctity, besought God with great fervency, that those envious spirits might not hinder them in their last passage. And devout Bernard to the same purpose, when he drew near his end, he sued to his friend for his earnest prayers, that the heel of his life might be kept safe from the serpent, so as he might not find where to fix his sting: arm me for my last brunt, prayed divine Hall, O my God, stand by me in my last combat, make me faithful to the death, that thou mayest give me a crown of life. Why thus let us pray in case of despair; remember me, O God, according to the multitude of thy tender compassions, and blot out my iniquities out of thy remembrance for thy name's sake, impute not unto me those hellish thoughts suggested by Satan, which through thy grace I detest unfeignedly, under which I desire to be humbled, and from which I beg to be delivered! Return O Lord, cause the light of thy countenance to shine upon me, refresh my parched soul with the sense of thy mercy, dispel the mists of this black temptation, rebuke Satan, and restrain his malice. Thou art the God of peace, tread Satan I beseech thee, under my feet shortly, that with a quiet and chearful spirit I may finish my course. O plead my cause against the enemy of my soul, and of thy glory! Lord, how long wilt thou look on? rescue my soul from these fiery assaults of the wicked one; I am sore troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I walk in heaviness

havinels all the day long, my heart panteth, my soul is exceedingly disquieted with temptations, this thou hast said, O Lord, keep not silence; O be not far off from me, stir up thyself and awake to my judgment, curb and chain up Satan, that he may molest no longer, and strengthen thy poor servant, that through thy might I may conquer and triumph over him: and my soul shall rejoice in the Lord, it shall rejoice in his salvation; all my bones shall say, 'Lord, who is like unto thee, who deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and needy from him that spoileth him,' Psal. lv. 9, 10.

6. Above all, take the shield of faith in Jesus Christ, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. iv. 16. Our faith will do wonders, if thereby we take Christ Jesus, and set him against the tempter, we are not so weak in the hands of Satan, as Satan is in the hands of Jesus Christ; turn him then over to Jesus Christ, and let Christ alone with him: thus did the afore said Mrs. Brettergh, after a great conflict with Satan; Satan, said she, reason not with me, I am but a weak woman, if thou hast any thing to say, say it to my Christ, he is my advocate, my strength, and my Redeemer, and he shall plead for me. It was the speech of Tulerus, one that Luther prized above all, though he said he, the mariners make use of their oars in the time of calm, yet when a storm comes down, the mariners leave all, and fly to their anchor: so though at other times we may make use of resolutions, vows, &c. yet when the storm of temptation comes down, nothing then so good as to fly to the anchor of faith, or to cast the anchor of faith into the vail; then Christ, and none but Christ; Lord, though thou slayest me, yet will I trust in thee: and Satan, though thou slayest me, yet will I keep to Jesus Christ. I remember a story of one Christopher Hafs, a senator of Halens, in Suevia, who lying on his death-bed, and one like a scribe, or scrivener, appeared to him, who bringing paper, pen and ink, sat down at the table, and in this manner spake to the sick man, 'O Christopher, number all thy sins in their order, which ever thou committedst,

mittedst, for I am sent of God that I may write them down, and carry them to the tribunal, where thou must shortly give an account.' At these words, the dying man lifting himself up in his bed as well as he could, knowing that now he had to deal with Satan, he answered boldly, 'If I must number my sins, first then write over them the title, and let this be it, the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; and to this title, said he, do thou under-write all my sins.' The devil in his feigned habit, no sooner heard this answer, but presently he vanished. What, is Satan busy to work our souls into despair? let us then stir up ourselves to believe, and roll our souls upon Jesus Christ for life and salvation, and Satan will avoid.

7 Mind the witness of the Spirit, either in former times, or at this time. Sometimes when Satan is most busy, the Lord steps in with his own testimony, and stops the lion's mouth, that he can say no more: Surely this should be minded. And this minds me of those horrid temptations which my dear and reverend brother, Mr. Edward Gee, had on his death's bed. At that time of his last sickness I went to visit him, and I found him as full of spiritual ravishings and heavenly joys, as I thought, his heart could hold, he expressed them so largely in a continued speech for a long time, that I could do nothing all the while but admire, and give God the glory. But about two hours after I had left him, and was gone, Satan began his assaults of diffidence and despair, thrice he assaulted him, and nothing was seen or heard by the witnesses waiting on, but at the first time Mr. Gee said, Away with thee, away with thee, thou accuser of the brethren, God confound thee. And when Satan assaulted him a second time, he said, Who is he that condemns? It is God that justifies: And I know that God will tread Satan under my feet; he that is in me, is stronger than he that is against me. And when Satan assaulted him the third time, he said, Now have we beaten him, I am nothing; but what I am, I am by the grace of God. Whether at this time, or at another, was a very remarkable temptation, I shall declare it (as it is given to me) in Mr. Gee's own words;

words: A minister and some others being with him, he told them thus: I was praying, said he, to God my merciful Father in Christ Jesus for the main thing viz. that he would strengthen, and perfect, and give me life everlasting. To which purpose I used that scripture in Psalm cxxxviii. 8. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me, thy mercy, O Lord endureth for ever, forsake not the works of thine own hands,* and then (said he) the devil came to me, and suggested this, it's true, thou prayest, and usest scripture as an argument in prayer, and thou sayest, thou believest, but God will give mercy only to them that are true believers. And now what proof or evidence canst thou give me that thou art a true believer? Upon this, said Mr. Gee, I was in a most woful condition, and it was far worse with my soul than any pangs of death; I was full of horror and terror, so that I was ready to tumble off my bed into the grave; yea into the pit of hell, and I was ready to cry out, Oh damned wretch that I am! and I was the more full of horror, because I had said so much of my assurance and joy to them that were about me before: But this temptation lasted but a while; for, 1. God my most merciful Father in Christ Jesus, came into my soul with his testimony. And, 2. Christ my most blessed Redeemer came into my soul with his testimony. And, 3. The Spirit, my sanctifier, came into my soul with his testimony, and they write their testimony in my heart, as if I should writ upon paper with a pen and ink, and God my merciful Father enabled me to say to Satan, Thou implacable and irreconcilable enemy of my soul, away with thee, away with thee, it's true what thou sayest, that none but true believers can receive any comfort and strength from God; but see thou here, I have a three-fold testimony that I am a true believer; God my most merciful and heavenly Father, Christ my most blessed and dear Saviour, and the holy Spirit. I have these three witnesses, and therefore away with thee. And now, said he, the devil's mouth was stopped, and my soul triumphed: So that I had a fuller testimony of the Spirit after this conflict, and more joy than ever I had in all my life before, as I remember; nay, I had more joy than I can conceive, or

an angel can express. I tell this, said he, for God's glory and for your good; and I pray you tell it to others, that so they may know what malice and spite the devil bears to their souls, and likewise that they may be comforted as was. And if the Lord deals thus with any of us, if he come with this seal, oh let us mind it, and make the same use of it as he did, in repelling Satan, and then we may expect the same he had, both victory, and joy, and triumph.

Ministration of, and Communion with ANGELS.

PSAL. XCI. 11, 12. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

P R O L E G O M E N A.

S E C T. I.

Of the Occasion of them.

MINISTRATION of Angels, is a point both scriptural and practical: That such a thing is, no Christian doubts that ever I yet heard of, only the manner of ministration may seem strange to them who are not thoroughly acquainted with the subject. I perceive by what hath been told me by a precious friend, that such as have lately discoursed of angels, have met with the censure of more curious conjecture, than of evidence in their discourse, reason not reaching to the subject, and scripture not speaking distinctly of it. I deny not, but some may have met with that censure in respect of some controversies about the deputation of angels; yet in other things not controverted, I verily believe (notwithstanding all censures) they have brought truth to light. It is in my mind what Peter Martyr saith, that to enquire of the angels accurately and subtilly is, *Magis*

diriguntatem nostram, quam ad salutem; and he wisheth that schoolmen in their knotty, thorny and unprofitable discourses, had observed this; and yet he confesseth, it is profitable for us to know how the angels are destined to our ministry, for thereby we understand God's goodness towards us; and therefore of this, saith he, the scripture is not silent. Yea, of this, saith Musculus, the scripture is very full. Yea, the scripture, saith Calvin, standeth most upon that which makes most to our comfort, and confirmation of faith, to wit, that the angels are distributors and administrators of God's bounty towards us, and therefore the scripture reciteth, that they watch for safety, Psal. xci. 11. and xxxiv. 7. Gen. xvi. 9, &c. Howsoever I approve well of the caution, and it was therefore my resolution to have altered my method, and every section where the difficulty lay; First, To have delivered my own tenets. Secondly, To have backed them with such authors as are most orthodox. Thirdly, To have proved them by scripture. Fourthly, To have given in experiences. But the press having received my papers, and went on too fast for me, and I was prevented before I was aware. And yet I see not but the thing is done, tho' not distinctly in the method as I proposed: If any thing be wanting, it is only the citation of such authors, as I most build upon, and of those texts of scripture which they so numerously cite. I shall therefore lay the foundation on which I make it my work to superstruct, and this (sith I cannot do otherwise) I shall pip upon the front or porch of the following fabric, that all the work that follows may seem the less strange, and become the more edifying to the intelligent reader.

S E C T. II.

Of the Sayings and Proofs of Dr. Usher, Bishop of Armagh.

LEST any thing I write may be thought novel, I appeal unto others, both godly and orthodox divines. And first let us hear what bishop Usher in his *Body of Divinity*, one of our worthies, if not most worthy, hath said of the several kinds of angel-ministration. The offices which angels perform towards man are either in this life,
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or in the life to come. In this life the good offices which the angels perform towards the godly, are either as instruments to bestow on them good things, or to keep them from evil things; the good things partly concern the body, and partly the soul: For the body, 1. They are used as instruments to bestow things for the preservation of it, and to bring necessary helps to men in their distress, as to Elias and Hagar. 2. They are appointed of God to be as a guard and garrison unto his children to comfort and defend them walking in their lawful callings, Psal. xxxiv. 7. and xci. 11. 3. They give an happy success to them in the good things they go about, Gen. xxiv. 7. and xl. 4. They are appointed as watchmen over the saints, that by their presence they might keep their bodies in steadfastness, holiness and purity, 1 Cor. xi. 10. And for the soul, they are, 1. To reveal the will of God to the saints, and to inform them in things which he would have done, Acts x. 5. 2. To stir up good motions in their hearts. 3. To comfort them in sorrow, as Christ was comforted, being distressed in soul, Luke xxii. 43, 44. and as Paul was comforted, Acts xxvii. 23, 24. 4. To rejoice at the conversion of saints, Luke xv. 10. Again, the evil things from which the good angels do keep the godly, do partly concern the body and partly the soul. The evils of the body are either without us or within us: The evils without us from which we are preserved by the ministry of angels are, 1. From those dangers that one man bringeth upon another. 2. From those they are subject unto by reason of wild beasts. 3. From those they are subject unto by reason of other creatures without life. 4. They do not only preserve the bodies of the saints, but all things are theirs, as their goods, wife, children, and families. The evils within us, from which also the angels keep the bodies of saints are, 1. Sickness. 2. Famine. 3. Death. And as thus for the body, so the evils of the soul from which the angels keep us, are the evils of sin, and that two ways. 1. By their continual presence. 2. By their power. Lastly, The good offices which the good angels are to perform towards men after this life. 1. They carry the souls of the godly, being separated from
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the body, with comfort into heaven, Luke xvi. 22. 2. They wait upon Christ at the day of judgment to gather all the faithful unto him, and to separate the wicked from among them, Mat. xxiv. 31, 51. and to rejoice at the sentence he shall give. This analysis we have from the eminently able, and worthy divine, the glory of this and our neighbour nation. His character is, *Antiquitatis primæ peritissimus, orthodoxæ religionis vindex* [ananterretos] *errorum malleus, in concinendo frequens, sacundus, præpotens, vitæ inculpatæ exemplar spectabile*. And for his catechism out of which it is taken, it is the sum and substance of Christian religion, upon which as a more sure foundation we build our faith, and ground all our hopes.

S E C T. III.

Of the Sayings and Proofs of Mr. Edward Leigh.

ANOTHER of our worthies gives us another scheme, both of the ministration of angels, and of our communion with angels, as thus, Their ministration or service in respect of the church and people of God is, 1. They are glad for the good which befalls the elect, Luke ii. 14. and xv. 10. 2. They reveal unto them the will of God, Dan. viii. 9. Rev. i. 11. 3. They keep the elect from dangers both of soul and body, so far as is expedient, Gen. xix. 16. and xxviii. 12. and xxv. 7. and xxxii. 1, 2. Psal. xxxiv. 7. and xci. 11. Numb. xxii. 1 Kings xix. 7. 2 Kings vi. 16. and viii. 9, 10. 4. They comfort them in distress, heaviness and distraction, Gen. xx. 17, 18. and xxxii. 1, 2. Isa. vi. 6. Luke i. 30. and ii. 10. Mat. xxviii. 5. Acts x. 4. and xxvii. 23, 24. Judg. vi. 12. and xiii. 10. Dan. x. 12. Mat. i. 20. and ii. 12, 13. 5. They suggest holy thoughts into their hearts, as the devil doth evil and unclean thoughts. 6. They carry the souls of the elect into heaven at the end of this life, Luke xvi. 22. and at the day of judgment they shall gather the elect from the four winds, and separate between elect and reprobate, Mat. xxiv. 31. and xiii. 27. And as for our communion with them, 1. We honour them, and judge them more noble creatures than man: They have greater wisdom, holiness and power than man hath. 2. We love them

them because they love us and delight in our good, being ready to help us every where. 3. We should be careful of our carriage because of their presence, we should not sin because of the angels. 4. We should desire to make them examples of our lives, that we may do God's will as they do. 5. If angels should appear visibly unto us, we should honour them as more excellent creatures, but still keep within the bounds of civil or fraternal honour as to our fellow servants, tho' above us; and not honour them with religious worship. The Papists say, a religious worship is due unto them, not primary, such as is due unto God, but secondary: But we reply, religious worship is only due to the Creator, as being the command of the first table; and civil worship is only due to the creature, as being the command of the second table. By consent of all religious worship is that whereby we do acknowledge God to be the *primum principium*, the *ultimum finem et summum bonum*, now this is but one, and we may well say, there is a *summum bonum secundario*, as there is a secundarious religious worship. Again, there is the same reason of a religious worship, as there is of a divine act of faith, but we cannot say that we may with a divine faith believe in God primarily, and in angels secondarily, for this were ridiculous.

Consecrations from angels. 1. We should imitate the angels. 2. It shows us how much we are beholden to God and Christ; no angels could love us if it were not for him: God's angels are our angels to defend and keep us. God hath committed the care of us to his ministering spirits. This is the doctrine of angels, laid down by the author as one of the fundamentals and main grounds of Christian religion; so then to deny this, it were to deny a fundamental, which (saith the same author) must of necessity destroy religion.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Sayings and Proofs of Mr. Samuel Clarke.

ANOTHER of our divines, whose works praise him in the gates, is yet more full. The ministration of angels is either in this life, or hereafter: In this life it relates to mens bodies and souls; for bodies in general, they are

are said to attend on the saints, and to minister to them, Heb. i. 14. Mat. xviii. 10. In particular, 1. They are as stewards to provide for them in their need, 1 Kings xix. 5. 2. As physicians to cure their maladies, John v. 4. 3. As nurses to bear up, and to keep them from hurt, Psal. xci. 11, 12. 4. As guides to direct and keep them from wanderings, Gen. xxiv. 7. and xxxii. 1. 5. As soldiers to guard them, Psal. xxxiv. 7. 2 Kings vi. 17. 6. As rescuers and deliverers to pull them out of dangers, Acts v. 19. and xii. 7, 8. Dan. vi. 22. — In reference to their souls in this life. 1. They are as prophets and teachers to instruct them, Dan. viii. 16, 17. and ix. 22, 23, 24. Luke i. 15, 34, 35. Acts i. 11. 2. They are comforters to them in their fears and perplexities, Gen. xxi. 17. Isa. vi. 6, 7. Luke xxii. 22, 23. 3. Coadjutors to stand with them against Satan, Zech. iii. 1, 2. Jude 9. 4. Fellow members to rejoice with them at the conversion of sinners, Luke xv. 10. 5. Tutors to encourage them in duties, 2 Kings i. 15. and to punish them for their offences, that they may be brought to repentance, 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. — Hereafter in the life to come they are, 1. Watchers to carry their souls at the separation of them from their bodies into heaven, Luke xvi. 22. 2. As keepers at the last day to gather all the elect together, Matth. xxiv. 31. 3. Fanners or sifters to separate the evil from the good, Matth. iii. 40. 4. Companions in heaven, to join with them in praising God, Rev. vii. 9, 10, 11.

One objection is raised, that God's children often fall into inconveniencies, how then are they attended by the angels?

Ans. 1. They are preserved by the angels from many inconveniencies that they know not of; as we have devils about us continually, so certainly there is a conflict between the good angels and them about us continually. 2. If at any time we fall into inconveniencies, it is because we are out of our way, and then they have no charge over us, Psal. xci. 11. 3. If we suffer in the custody of angels any inconveniency, it is that we may be tried, exercised, and made better by it; for if they keep us not from
 ill,

1. they keep us in ill, and deliver us out of it at length, so that there is nothing in the world befalls God's children, but they are gainers by it at last, whatsoever it is, Rom. viii. 28.

This may teach us not to grieve these good spirits; if we commit sins in secret where no eye of man sees us, yet God and the blessed angels see us, and grieve when we fall into sin. 2. To bless that God that hath thus honoured us, not only by taking our nature on him, but by giving us his own guard of angels to attend us. 3. To take an holy state upon us, and to think ourselves too good to abase ourselves to sin, to be slaves to men, seeing we have angels to attend upon us; we are kings, and have a mighty guard, therefore we should carry ourselves answerable. 4. Not to despise the meanest Christian, seeing angels despise not to attend upon them. 5. To imitate the angels. 1. In rejoicing at the conversion of sinners, as they do, Luke xv. 10. 2. In reverencing the majesty of God as they do, by covering their faces, Isa. vi. 2, 25. 3. In standing ready prest to execute the will of the Lord as they do, Psal. ciii. 20, 21. 4. To execute for manner as they do, viz. with chearfulness, sincerity, and without wearisomness. This is a piece of that marrow of divinity, collected out of the works of our most judicious, experienced, and orthodox English divines, with some additions of his own, as the author confesseth.

S E C T. V.

Of the Sayings and Proofs of Dr. Manton.

TO these I shall add another of known parts and piety. This tutelage of saints is from their first conception in the womb, till the translation of body and soul into glory. Survey all the passages of life from the womb to the grave, nay, after death till the resurrection, the ministry of angels doth not wholly cease; Their care beginneth as soon as the child is quickned in the womb, for then they have another distinct charge to look after; and as they are servants of providence, by their help they are born and brought into the world, God's providence taketh date thence, Gal. i. 15. and they, I say, are instruments of providence; they watch over us in infancy and childhood;

childhood; little ones are committed to their custody, and babes and sucklings have their angels, Mat. xviii. 10. Jesus was provided for in his cradle by an angel, Mat. ii. 13. The devil rampeth about the elect, while they are yet in their swaddling cloaths; that expression (Rev. xii.) of the dragon seeking to devour the man child as soon as he was born, is figurative, but it alludeth to what is true. Again as we grow up, they rejoice at our conversion, Luke xv. 10. we read of joy in heaven over a sinner that repenteth: You cannot gratify the angels more than in your conversion to God; the devil seeks to hinder it as much as he can, but they rejoice when a brand is pluck'd out of the burning, Zech. iii. Again, after conversion they watch over us in duty, and danger, and temptations in duties, where Satan is most busy to hinder, Zech. iii. 1. they are most helpful. The angels are in the assemblies of the faithful, 1 Cor. xi. 10. so in dangers, when Peter was in prison, God sendeth him an angel to bring him out, Acts xii. 7. Rufinus speaketh of a young man, a martyr, on the rack, that had his face wiped by an angel, and refreshed by him in the midst of his pains: Nay, in casual dangers, which we cannot foresee nor prevent, Psal. xci. 12. *He shall give his angels charge over thee, that thou dash not thy feet against a stone*; so in temptations, Mat. iv. 11. They ministered to Christ when he was tempted by the devil, they came to shew how God will deal with his people in like cases. Once more they are with us to comfort us in death; in the midst of his agonies the Lord Jesus was comforted and refreshed by an angel, Luke xxii. 43. so they are with the faithful, helping and easing them in their sicknesses. After death they carry our souls to heaven, as Lazarus was carried into Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. 22: tho' the body had not the honour of a pompous burial, yet the soul is solemnly conveyed by angels, and gathered up into the communion of the souls of just men made perfect; as Christ himself also ascended into heaven in the company of angels; Acts i. 10. Once more, after death they guard our bodies in the grave, as the angels guarded Christ's sepulchre, Mat. xxviii. 2, 3, 4. God did set his guards, as well as the high priests. Their last ministry

Q

and

and service about the faithful, is to gather up their bodies at the last day. They shall gather up the elect from the four winds, Mat. xxiv. 31. and then their office and charge ceaseth. Thus far this author.

S E C T. VI.

Of the Sayings and Proofs of Bishop Hall.

IN this doctrine I have the consent of many others; and to this purpose I have cited Dyke, Dingley, Laurence, in whose book of communion and war with angels (saith Mr. Baxter in his *Saints Everlasting Rest*, part 2. chap. 7.) is taught the true end and spiritual use of this doctrine. But I leave him and Mr. Dingley in their controversies; my meaning is only to hold forth positive, presupposed, and on both sides granted, and decided truth. And in that respect I shall transcribe but one more testimony from a famous divine of our own nation who has wrote upon practical subjects. It is bishop Hall, who, speaking of the employments and operations of angels, saith, What variety is here of your assistance? one while ye lead us in our way as ye did Israel, Exod. xxiii. 2. another while ye instruct as ye did Daniel, Dan. viii. 16, 17. one while ye fight for us, as ye did for Joshua, Josh. v. 13. another while ye purvey for us, as ye did for Elias, 1 Kings xix. 5. one while ye fit us for our holy vocation, as ye did Isaiah, Isa. vi. 7. another while ye dispose of the opportunities of our calling for good, as ye did of Philip's to the eunuch, Acts viii. 26. one while ye foretel our danger, as to Lot, Gen. xix. 12, 13. another while ye comfort us in our affliction as to Hagar, Gen. xxi. 17. one while ye oppose evil projects laid against us, as to Balaam, Numb. xxii. 32. another while ye will be striven with for blessing, as with Jacob, Hof. xii. 4. one while ye resist our offensive courses as to Moses, Exod. iv. 24, 25, 26. another while ye encourage us in our devotions, as ye did Paul, and Silas, and Cornelius, Acts xii. 25. and x. 3, 4. one while ye deliver from prison, as Peter, Acts xii. 7, 8, 9. another while ye preserve from danger and death, as the three children, Dan. iii. 25. one while ye are ready to restrain our presumption, as the cherub before the gate of paradise, Gen. iii. 24. another while to excite our courage, as to Elias,

2 Kings

1 Kings i. 15. one while to refresh and chear us in our sufferings, as to the apostles, *Acts v. 19, 20, 21.* another while to prevent our sufferings, as to Jacob in the pursuit of Laban and Esau, *Gen. xxxi. 34. and xxxii. 1.* one while you cure our bodies, as at the pool of Bethesda, *John v. 4.* another while ye carry up our souls to glory, as ye did to Lazarus, *Luke xvi. 22.* It were endless to instance in all the gracious offices which ye perform.

I shall need to transcribe no more out of him, whom I have so often cited in the discourse that follows, But if any be offended, that I have so highly esteemed of this bishop, is there any communion with such in name or thing? I shall answer, 1. I never was offended with the name of bishop, nor will any wise man, that finds the name so frequently used in scripture, be offended with it. 2. Nor am I offended with the thing, if moderation were used and such an episcopacy erected as bishop Hall, and bishop Usher did propound as satisfactory; and such men to manage it as were peaceable, godly, and eminent for grace and gifts: Nor do I believe any oath taken by me was against such an episcopacy. Thus some affirm, it is not against moderate episcopacy, but only against the exorbitant species, introducing unavoidably the many mischiefs we have seen and felt. If all exorbitances of power were retrenched by the bishop, and if those presbyteries, which no law hitherto hath forbidden, were restored to their primitive rights, I know no reason but I might submit both to the name and thing. But from the dominion of absolute prelacy, and from the rigorous imposition of ceremonies by it, and from the extirpation of dissenting brethren, who will not, nor dare not conscientiously submit, subscribe, or swear unto it, the Lord deliver us. 3. I ever looked on bishop Hall as peaceable and moderate. Mr. Baxter cites him in this view; I shall prove (saith he) from the example of bishop Hall, that moderate men will agree on the foregoing terms;—Blessed be God (saith the bishop there is no difference in any essential matter betwixt the church of England; and her sisters of the reformation; we agree in every point of Christian doctrine with

the least variation. — The only difference is in the form of outward administration, wherein we are also so far agreed, as that we all profess this form not to be essential to the being of a church, tho' much importing the well or better being of it, according to our several apprehensions thereof: And that we do all retain a reverend and loving opinion of each other in our own several ways, not seeing any reason why so poor a diversity should work any alienation of affection in us one towards another. But withal nothing hinders but that we may come yet closer to one another, if both may resolve to meet in the primitive government (whereby it is meet we should both be regulated) universally agreed on by all antiquity, wherein things were ordered and transacted by the consent of the presbytery, moderated by one constant president thereof — And if in this point (wherein the distance is so narrow) we could condescend to each other, all other circumstances and appendances of various practices or opinions might without any difficulty be accorded. But if there must be a difference of judgment in these matters, of outward policy, why should not our hearts be still one? why should such a diversity be of power to endanger the dissolving of the bond of brotherhood? may we have the grace but to follow the truth in love; we shall in these several tracts overtake her happily in the end, and find her embracing of peace, and crowning us with blessedness. So far bishop Hall. 4. Nor was he only peaceable and moderate, but golden-mouth'd and of godly life. Mr. Baxter reckons him amongst some others, that have been excellent instruments of the church's good, and so eminent for God's graces and gifts, that their names will be precious whilst Christ hath in England a reformed church; were there in all England but one such man dissenting from us (saith he) as Hooper, Farrar, Latimer, Cranmer, Ridley, Jewel, Abbot, Davenant, Usher, Hall, &c. What sober godly man would not be exceeding solicitous for a reconciliation? for the last of these, the world well knows he had a double portion of the gifts of the tongue above his brethren; when he lived his lips dropped myrrh, and he open the oyl of calamus, and cinnamon, the smell where

of hath filled the house of God with such a perfume, as this age will never wear out. His works all praise him, and amongst them all, those 'of the mystery of godliness, and of the invisible world;' he left as a legacy, and special valediction to the saints. I cannot but give much to these last works of his, and especially to that part of the invisible world, viz. *of God and his angels*. Some have observed that many holy men in their last works, as they drew nearer to heaven so they become more spiritual and heavenly in their work; thus Dr. Preston ended his works with a treatise of the knowledge of the divine essence and attributes: and Mr. Bolton ended his works with a treatise of the four last things, death, judgment, hell and heaven; and this author ended his works with a treatise of the invisible world; and not without reason, when our bodily eyes are gluttied with the view of things that are seen (a prospect which can afford us nothing but vanity and vexation) what can be more meet, said he, than to feed our spiritual eyes with the light of invisible glories? It was his aim in that work, that the reader should aspire with him towards that happiness which is laid up above, for all those that love the appearance of our Lord Jesus, and therein I conspire with him, and oh that such might be the issue of all that make use of his excellent piece, or of this slender work of mine.

S E C T. VII.

Of the sayings and Proofs of Bucanus, Polanus, Dieft, &c.

I Might here bring in many foreign divines, who in this doctrine keep harmony with us. You may please to hear some of them speak thus in their own language.

(2) Bucanus in his analysis of the heads, or common places of Christian religion, saith thus; Angeli sunt præcipue ministri erectorum, Heb. i. 14 & hoc multipliciter; primum quidem in vita, idque vel dirigendo, vel defendendo, & custodiendo electos juxta illud, Psal. xci. 11, 12. & omnibus ab hostibus, & omnibus periculis vitam tuendo, Exod. xxxiii. 2. Psal. xxxiv. 7. vel pro electis exequendo judicia Dei adversus hostes ecclesiæ ut colligitur ex Gen. xix. 10. & 2 Reg. xix. 35. Acts xii. 23. item suggerendo mentibus piorum pias cogitationes, eodemque

movendo, & ad omne bonum promovendo; nunquam enim angeli boni aliquid suggerunt a lege Dei diversum, Acts x. 4, 5. Gal. i. 8. & iii. 19. Acts. vii. 53. item eos juvando & consolando, Luc. i. 19. 26. Acts i. 11. 2. Regi. 15. Acts xxvii. 23, 24. Deinde in morte dum adsunt presto fidelibus in ipso agone, adeoque ipsorum animus deferunt ad cœlestem beatitudinem ut exemplo Lazari liquet, Luc. xvi. 22. Postremo in fine sæculi, quando colligent ossa omnium fidelium, ut animis denuo unita resurgant ad vitam, Matth. xxiv. 31. & separabunt malos de medio justorum, & mittent illos in caminum ignis, hos vero introducent in regnum cœlorum, Mat. xiii. 41, 42, 43.

Potius in his Syntagma Theologiæ Christianæ, scitum thus, Erga homines duplex est Angelorum officium, unum beneficia Dei dispensare, & ministrare iis qui electi sunt ad vitam æternam, sicut de illis dicitur, Heb. i. 14. & officium hoc exequuntur multis modis; primum docent electos, & revelant illis voluntatem, judicia, & mysteria, Dei annunciant opera & beneficia ejus, dubios & perturbatos de veritate instruunt, ab erroribus atque idololatria abducunt, Gen. xix. 12, 13. Dan. vi. 16. &c. Dan. ix. a vers. 21. usque ad finem, Luc. i. 11. 26. Mat. i. 20, 21. Luc. ii. 8. Mat. xxviii. 5. Acts i. 11. and x. 3. Apoc. i. 1. & cap. ult. 16. Apoc. xix. 10. & cap. ult. v. 8, 9. Secundo, custodiunt boni Angeli electos contra omnia pericula animæ & corporis, contra Sathanz, & aliorum hostium insidias, molitiones, conatus, insultus, quemadmodum dicitur, Psal. xxxiv. 8. Psal. xci. 11, 12. Exempla sunt plurima in Scriptura Sacra, Gen. xix. and xxviii. 12. and xxxii. 1, 2. Num. xxii. 22. & sequentibus, Dan. vi. 23. and x. 13. Acts v. 17, 18, 19. and xii. 7, 8, 9, 10. Tertio, boni Angeli tum alloquio tum declaratione præsentis suæ consolantur consternatos, afflictos, & anxios: Sic Gen. xxi. 17, 18. and xxxii. 1, 2. Isa. vi. 6, 7. Dan. x. 12. Luc. i. 30. and ii. 10. Acts x. 4. and xxvii. 23, 24. Quarto, portant Angeli sancti electorum morientium animas in cælum, ut videre est in exemplo Lazari, Luc. xvi. 22. Quinto, in extremo illo die, & illi, adventu Christi, cogent electos homines a quatuor ventis,

vestis, ab extremo terræ usque ad extremum cœli, Matth. xiv. 31. Marc. xiii. 22.—Hactenus primum bonorum Angelorum officium erga homines. Alternum est judicium Dei exequi in homines. Officium hoc exequuntur boni Angeli duobus modis; Primo in hac vita castigationis paterne in electos sunt ministri, Sam. xxiv. 16, 17.—Secundo in ultimo die segregabunt reprobos ab electis, Mat. xiii. 41, 42, 43.

To these authors I might add, Aurelius, B. za, Bucer, Melancthon, Peter Martyr, Pareus; and above all, learned and godly Zanchius, but him I have often cited in the Treatise; and what needs more? it is sure (saith Mr. Byfield) that the angels are always in garrison for the elect, pitching their tents round about them that fear God; that which Elisha and his man saw with bodily eyes, every believer may be assured of by faith, *and seeing now we are thus compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses*, Heb. xii. Let us in God's fear begin, and go on in the discovery of this duty, viz. Of Ministration of, and Communion with Angels.

The First B. O O K.

HEB. i. 14. *Are they not all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of Salvation.*

CHAP. I. SECT. I.

The coherence and division of the words.

THE Apostle is here making a comparison betwixt Christ and the angels; as the world is wonderfully inclined to superstition, so it is wont many times to darken the glory of Christ, by too much exalting to angels; good reason it is therefore that they should be put into their place; the angels are excellent, but Christ more excellent: The angels are glorious but Christ more glorious.

Now the prelation of Christ before the angels, the apostle proves by several arguments; as, 1. From the name of Christ, he is called God's Son; so are not the angels; 2. From the rule and dominion of Christ, he is the head and prince, so are not the angels: 3. From the office and place of Christ, he sits at God's right hand, *i. e.* he hath the second place given him after the Father, he is the Father's lieutenant, or his chief ambassador to exercise all power; so are not the angels; and therefore it follows that Christ is more excellent and glorious than them all; indeed they are spirits, and therein they have a title of great excellency given them; but they are ministering spirits, and that takes off, and holds them within the compass of their degree; if they but minister, they must needs be inferior to Christ, who is Lord over all; and tho' it may be objected, that Christ is sometimes called a *minister*, and that *he came to minister*, Rom. xv. 8. Acts xx. 28. yet that is not in regard of need, but of good will, the angels do it of necessity, but Christ voluntarily; it is natural in the angels, but only by accident in Jesus Christ; and therefore in all things Christ hath the prehemincy, yet let not this doctrine pass without some consolation to the saints and people of God; be it known to you, that as angels are ministering spirits, so they are sent forth to minister for you; are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation?

You see I had need to be careful what I say of the angels, lest that honour which should be given to God and Christ, may in any sort redound to them. This hath been the error of former ages, and of all errors there is almost none more ancient than this. Paul himself had much to do with some, who so advanced the angels, that in a manner they would have brought Christ under subjection, *Let no man beguile you of your reward*, saith he, *in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels*, Colos. ii. 18. Indeed there shines in them such a brightness of the majesty of God, that there is nothing whereunto we are more easily drawn, than with a certain admiration to fall down in worshipping of them; this very thing John in the relation confesseth of himself, but he addeth withal, that

that he received this answer, *See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God*, Rev. xix. 10. there is no worshipping of angels; and yet we must not throw away the comfortable doctrine of angels; I hope before I have done to convince you of a wonderful pledge of Christ's love to your persons in the administration of angels, Are they not all ministring spirits? &c.

In this text is a discription of angels, wherein. 1. Of their nature, Are they not Spirits? 2. Of their office, Are they not ministring Spirits? 3. Of their conjunction in this office, Are they not all ministring Spirits? 4. Of their commission and execution of this office so undertaken, Are they not all ministring spirits sent forth to minister? 5. Of the object about which the execution of their office is most conversant, Are they not all ministring spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.

S E C T. II.

Of the several Doctrines deduced from the Words.

FROM every part I may deduce a several doctrine; as,
1. That the angels are spirits. 2. That the office of the angels is to minister and serve. 3. That the highest angel is not exempted from this office. 4. That they have their commission from God and Christ to execute their office of ministration. 5. That the ministring office of the angels is not for all, but only for heaven's heirs. On the four first I shall only give a touch, but on the last I shall insist, and (if the Lord help) enlarge my discourse to the full of my design.

C H A P. II. S E C T. I.

Of the first Doctrine.

THE angels are spirits; and so is God, and so are the souls of men, but with this difference, God is a Spirit most simple, without any composition at all; the souls of men are spirits conjoined with flesh and blood; thus the philosopher describes the soul to be the act of the body: Now betwixt these two spirits are the angels, who are neither without all composition, as God is, nor are they covered with flesh and blood, as the soul of man is. I

know it is a question whether the angels have bodies? And,

1. The Peripatetics and schoolmen are for the negative: The angels, say they, are altogether incorporeal: And for this opinion are brought in by others these very texts, *Who maketh his angels spirits; and are they not all ministering spirits?* Psal. civ. 4.

2. The Platonics and many of the antients are on the other side: The angels have their proper bodies, saith Tertullian, and altho' invisible to us, yet visible to God. Augustine is of the same mind: And herein, saith Lombard, he followed many famous authors, as all the Platonicks, Origen, Lactantius, Basil, with all the writers almost of his time: And some more modern agree with them herein; all spirits have their bodies, saith Bernard, as need is, excepting only God himself; and the need that the angels have, he proves from this text, *Are they not all ministering spirits?* For how can they execute their ministry, saith he, without a body, especially amongst them that are in the body? besides, they could not discourse, nor move from place to place, without a body. Nor speaks he of bodies assumed, but of bodies proper and peculiar to themselves.

Methinks a middle betwixt both these comes nearest truth, That in comparison of God they are bodies, but in comparison of us they are pure and mighty spirits: Certainly the angels are not simply spirits as God is, who is a spirit most simple, without any composition at all; nor are they infinite or immense, as God is, but are terminated in their dimensions, and move from place to place as bodies do. Hence Zanchy approves rather of the antients, than of the schoolmen, That angels are not simply and altogether incorporeal, only their bodies, saith he, are not earthly, nor airy, nor heavenly, as the Stoicks would have them, for all such bodies were created of that chaos, Gen. i. 1. but rather as the imperial heaven is a corporeal substance far different from those nether heavens visible to us, so the angels made together with that heaven, are corporeal substances far purer, and more subtile than either earth, or air, or fire, or the matter of these visible heavens.

I will not say they are of the same body, but they may have

have like bodies to that glorious body of the highest heaven, or seat of the blessed; and so in respect of us or of our crass bodies, they may be called pure and mighty spirits.

C H A P. III.

Of the second Doctrine.

THE office of the angels is to minister and serve. It is true, they are called principalities, powers, mights, thrones, dominions; so the apostle speaks of Christ, *That he was set at God's right hand in heavenly places, far above all principalities, and powers, and mights, and dominions*, Eph. i. 20, 21. *And by him were all things created in heaven, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers*, Col. i. 16. by all which, tho' we understand not divers dignities of angels, whereby in nature they excel one another, yet we must needs understand the dignity, excellency, authority, and power, of every one of the angels.

And yet this hinders not, but that these mighty powers are ministering spirits; and therefore in other places, of scripture we find other titles given to them, as sometimes they are called watchers, *I saw in the visions of my head, and behold a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven*, Dan. iv. 13. And sometimes they are called soldiers, *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly soldiers (or of the heavenly host) praising God*, Luke ii. 13. Most frequently they are called angels, which is not a name of their nature, but of their office; the word signifies a messenger, as if they were ever running errands betwixt heaven and earth. So *Jacob dreamed of a ladder set on earth, whose top reached to heaven, and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it*, Gen. xxviii. 12. Now this is clear, that watchers, soldiers, and messengers, are but ministers and servants. If it be demanded what is their ministry, or service, it is either to God, or to men; in respect of God, they are said to *do his commandments, to hearken to the voice of his word, to behold the face of God, to celebrate the praises of God, and of Jesus Christ*, Psal. ciii. 20. Mat. xviii. 10. And in respect of men, they do them many offices of love and service, which we shall discover in the last point, *for are they not ministering spirits sent*

Ministration of, and sent forth to minister unto them, I say unto them, who shall be heirs of salvation?

C H A P. IV.

Of the third Doctrine.

THE highest angel is not exempted from this office. Are they not all ministering spirits? It is not one, or ten, nor a hundred, nor a thousand, but all angels and archangels, principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, are all ministering spirits. A question there is, 1. Of the order of angels, and if that be admitted, 2. Whether the chief of that order may be considered as ministering spirits?

For the first, Dionysius (I will not say the Areopagite) tells of nine orders, because of nine words in scripture relating to the angels, as seraphims, cherubims, thrones, powers, hosts, dominions, principalities, archangels, and angels, and at large he describes their several natures, distinctions, properties, as that the first three orders are for immediate attendance on the Almighty; and the next three orders for the general government of the creatures; and the last three orders for the particular good of God's elect; that the archangels surpass the beauty of angels ten times, principalities surpass the archangels twenty times, powers surpass the principalities forty times, &c. How he, or any other, came to this learning, is yet unknown, yet hath this hierarchy, in these several orders, passed for current thro' many ages of the church.

Learned Mede in his *Diatribæ* of the angels, tells of seven principal angels which minister before the throne of God, and therefore are called archangels, some of whose names we have in scripture, as Michael, Gabriel, Raphael; to this purpose he cites several texts, as, *I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which stand and minister before the glory of the holy One*, Tobit xii. 15. *And these seven are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro thro' the whole earth*, Zech. iv. 10. *And I saw, saith John, seven lamps before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God; and I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns; and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth;* and

and I saw the seven angels which stood before God, Rev. iv. 5. and v. 6. and viii. 2. And the archangel Gabriel speaks of himself to Zacharias in the very same language, *I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God*, Luke i. 19.

That there is order amongst the angels, I do not doubt; God is the God of order, and as he orders all things below, so no question he observeth a most exact order in the court of heaven: Amongst us some are superior, and some inferior, some greater, and others lesser; equality hath no place either on earth, or in hell; and in this visible heaven, *one star*, saith the apostle, *differs from another in glory*, 1 Cor. xv. 41. how then should we imagine any ataxy or confusion to be in heaven? Certainly there is a most beautiful distinction and order amongst the blessed angels, yet I am apt to think and do believe, that the difference of those glorious spirits in heaven, is not their nature, but in their offices; for as among men there is a parity and equality in respect of nature, and the excellency of the one above the other is but by accident, so it is with angels, they are equally spiritual substances, all equally created good, and pure, and perfect, and their imparity is because of the divers kinds of their offices, wherein they are employed: Hence some are simply called angels, some arch-angels, some principalities, some dominions, &c.

But, 2. Admitting this order and distinctions of angels, whether are not the highest angels ministring spirits? The Platonics that first divided them into three orders, as some above heaven, called *supercaelestes*, others in heaven, *caelestes*, and others under heaven, called *subcaelestes*, do suitably give them several offices: As, 1. They above heaven (I mean this visible heaven) constantly stand before God (as they say) praising, and lauding, and magnifying his name. 2. They in heaven are there seated to move, and rule, and govern the stars. 3. They under heaven, are some to rule kingdoms, others provinces, other cities, others particular men. Many Christians that write of the hierarchy of the angels, follow these opinions. Now by this surmise the highest angels do not minister to the saints, but only and immediately to God himself. But on the contrary,

contrary, did not *Michael*, (one of the seven) contend with *Satan* about the body of *Moses*? Jude 9. And was not *Gabriel*, who stands in the presence of God, sent to speak to *Zacharias*, and to *Mary*, and to shew the glad tidings of the gospel? Luke i. 19, 26. And were not those seven archangels called *seven eyes*, and the *seven spirits of God* sent forth into all the earth? Zech. iv. 10. Rev. v. 6. Surely then neither seraphims, nor cherubims, nor thrones, nor powers, are exempted from this office, they are all ministring spirits.

CHAP. V. SECT. I.

Of the fourth Doctrine.

THEY have their commission from God and Christ to execute their office of ministration; they will not go unless sent forth: As Christ would not do the office of mediator until he was called, Heb. v. 4, 5. so neither will the angels execute their office without a call: In this respect the angels are said to wait on Christ, they stand behind him, and receive deputations to their several offices: *I saw by night, and behold a man, and behind him were three red horses, speckled and white*, Zech. i. 8. i. e. Ministring spirits, prepared for judgment and mercy. When *Zachary* knew not who they were, the man that stood among the myrtle trees, Christ (the Captain of the Lord's host) answered and said, *These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro thro' the earth*, Zech. i. 10. The Lord first sends them, and then as agents and spies, they give intelligence of all things done in the world; they will not stir without a commission, but if he send them, they run, they fly. 'I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, said *Micaiah*, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand, and on his left; and the Lord said, Who shall persuade *Ahab*, that he may go up and fall at *Ramoth Gilead*? and one said on this manner, and another said on that manner, and there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him; and the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? and he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets; and he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also, go forth, and do so,' 1 Kings

xii. 19, 20, 21, 22. All this discourse is by way of resemblance, as it is with kings and princes, so it is said of God, All his host (good and bad angels) stand about him, and receive their commissions from him: No sooner is any design agreed on, but he gives out the word of command, Go forth, and do so. See here the commission, Go forth, saith God: *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth,* saith the apostle.

S E C T. II.

A Transition of the last Point.

ON these four several doctrines I have no mind to insist, and the rather, because they are so very speculative, and so full of controversy: For my part, I shall never forget what Graserus said he had found in his visiting the sick, and in his own preparation for well dying, That most of the controversies in divinity were utterly useless, and did entangle the consciences of the simple, just as the human inventions in Popery formerly did; and therefore he began with full bent of mind to shun and abhor them, and in his public preaching, to propound only those things which tended to the kindling of true faith in Christ, and to the exercise of true godliness according to the word of God, and to the procuring of true consolation both in life and death. Nor shall I forget what is wrote of Abraham Buchalzer, whose care in his public ministry was to avoid those questions that do but gender unto strife, and to instruct his auditors how to live well and die well. Some indeed blame him of cowardice. for that being endued by God with such excellent abilities, yet he would never enter into the lists with the fanatic adversaries of those times; but the reason was, because he always affected peace, having no delight in wrangling, which caused him to say to a friend, *Desii disputare, cepe supputare, quoniam illud dissipationem, hoc collectionem significat.* Besides, he saw that the greatest antagonists to the church's peace, had not so much as one spark of grace in them, and that there came no profit, but much hurt to the church of Christ by those continual quarrels amongst divines, I will not deny, nay, I dare not but acknowledge, that in our pulpits we may, (and must as occasion is) propound such a subject

subject as this of the angels, and no question but out of it we may draw matter for faith, and life, and comfort; but as to these particulars of the angels, that they are spirits, ministers of several orders, and all delegated, (as the Lord pleaseth) to this or that office, they are very abstruse points, wherein we may wrangle, and do as boys in sport, who strive to strike most sparks out of their flints, but never intend to kindle thereby for use: So we may dispute and jangle about words, and strive to strike out the most subtle and fine spun notions that we can invent, but alas! they cannot profit our souls, nor tend much to practice, which is the life and spirit of religion: Upon this I verily believe it is, that we have far less written in God's word of the nature of angels than of God himself, because the knowledge of God is far more practical, and less controversial, and more necessary to salvation than the knowledge of angels or archangels; only if there be any thing of angels revealed in scripture, and most worthy of our knowledge (as certainly there is) I take that to be it which the schoolmen in all their learning took least notice of, and that is of the ministration of angels in reference to God's people: *Ideo apostolus contentus fuit hunc enim unum explicare, quod sciret hunc esse principium, dicendo nonne omnes sunt administratorii spiritus in ministerium missi propter eos qui hereditatem capiunt salutis?* Zanch. With this one use could the apostle content himself, as knowing that in the doctrine of angels, this was the most principal, and indeed most practical; and therefore on this point I mean to enlarge, and the other points I shall leave to others: You may see to whom, *De custodia angelorum presens hic loco, loca quæ sublimioris sunt speculationis otiosis hominibus relinquamus*, Muscul in Psalm xci. 12. 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.'

C H A P. VI. S E C T. I.

Of the last Doctrine.

THE chief points yet remain, viz. That this ministering office of the angels is not for all, but only for heaven's heirs. On this I mean to insist, and to enlarge my discourse,

discourse, wherein I shall, 1. Confirm. 2. Apply. 1. For confirmation we have scripture and reason.

S E C T. II.

Scriptures for Angels Ministration.

HE shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone, Psal. xci. 11, 12.

In this scripture we may observe these particulars:

1. That the elect are so precious with God, that for their sakes he gives out commands.

2. That he commands the angels (his choice and chief servants) for the good of his chosen: *He shall give his angels charge over thee.* It is the usual way of his providence, to command the strong in behalf of the weak, and to commend the weak to those that are more strong: Thus it is betwixt children and parents, wives and husbands, the sick and sound, the saints and angels; he commands the angels over saints, or he commends the saints unto his angels.

3. That the end or meaning of the command is for the elect's custody, *to keep thee*: They must not exercise a power or dominion over them, they must not exact adoration or worship from them, as the evil spirits do from all their followers: But the command is to preserve them, defend them, deliver them, keep them, and protect them.

4. That the keeping of saints is limited to their ways; *They shall keep thee in all thy ways*; i. e. in all thy necessary lawful ways, not in thy sinful devious wanderings.

5. That the obedience of the angels to this command is precise, exact, and diligent; *They shall bear thee up in their hands*; i. e. they shall accompany thee, go before thee, wait upon thee, follow thee, as the shadow follows the body, compass thee round, lead thee, observe thee, and in all straits or necessities lend thee an hand.

6. That the issue of this obedience is safety and security; *lest thou dash thy foot against a stone*: By this one danger we understand, by a synecdoche, all other dangers, *q. d.* not any hurt, be it never so little, shall befall

the elect; so far shall they be from harm in the head, that it shall not reach the foot; indeed neither foot nor head, nor an hair of their head shall perish to their prejudice, Luke xxi. 18.

The sum of all is this, As nurses and mothers deal with their children, so must the angels deal with the children of God; that is, they must keep them in their ways, they must bear them up in their hands; children often stumble and fall, unless they be led and carried in hands and arms; and therefore God hath given his angels a charge over his children, to keep them, and carry them as in arms, lest they dash their feet against the stones.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them, Psal. xxxiv. 7. They that sometimes are compared to nurses and mothers, are otherwise compared to soldiers that incamp themselves about the saints: Thus when the young man had his eyes opened at Elisha's prayer, he saw, and *behold the mountain was full of horses, and chariots of fire round about Elisha,* 2 King vi. 17. Many military services are they ever and anon performing for the saints; they are watchful centinels, giving a timely alarm to prevent the enemy: 'Arise, and take the babe and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and bethow there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the babe to destroy him,' Mat. 2. 13. They are faithful life guards, preserving the saints in the midst of dangers: 'There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling; for he shall give his angels charge over thee,' Psal. xci. 11. They are safe convoys, bringing the saints thro' their wilderness to their heavenly Canaan: Jacob had experience hereof, 'And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him, and when Jacob saw them, he said, this is God's host, and he called the name of that place Mahanaim,' Gen. iii. 1. 3. i. e. two hosts or camps, the one before, and the other behind, or the one on one side, and the other on the other side; or they placed themselves in such sort, as to give Jacob assurance of safety every way.

S E C T. III.

Reasons for Angels ministration.

BUT why should they minister for the saints? the reasons are: 1. In respect of God. 2. In respect of them. 3. In respect of us.

1. There are some reasons in respect of God: As,

1. It is his will and pleasure that they should so minister. Thus Nebuchadnezzar could acknowledge, 'He doth according to his will in the army of heaven,' Dan. iv. 35. The Lord's will is the rule of all justice, and a most perfect law, whereby he governs the army of heaven, that is, the angels. Hence they are described to be God's ministers that do his pleasure, Psal. ciii. 21. They enquire no further what is to be done, or why it should be done, but acquiesce in the discovery of his will and pleasure. Indeed all things and actions are resolved into this first principle, the good pleasure of his will: *He worketh all things after the counsel of his will*, Eph. i. 11. This is the supreme reason.

2. It is his command that they should so minister: Every thing that God wills, he doth not command, he wills sin to be in the world, but he doth not command it, for then he would be the author of sin; but as for the angels ministration, he wills and commands them to it: 'Bless the Lord ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkning to the voice of his word,' Psal. ciii. 20. Upon this ground is the Lord very often called the Lord of hosts, *i. e.* the Lord of angels, for so Jacob called the two armies of angels God's host, Gen. xxxii. 1. And the multitude of angels that praised God at Christ's nativity, are called a multitude of the heavenly hosts, Luke ii. 13. Look as commanders say to their soldiers, Go, and they go; so saith God to his angels, Go and they go; go and minister to my saints, and presently they minister.

3. It is his goodness that they should so minister. As if the Lord should deal with us according to our demerits, rather dragons and tygers should wait upon us than angels: It is more than we can challenge that any creature after the fall should be serviceable unto us; but

that all the host of heaven should be abased to so low : work, as to be sent forth to minister for the meanest saint even for us poor sinful wretches, dust and ashes. Oh ! what goodness is this ? Upon this account of the love, mercy, and goodness of God, we read so often of the Lord's sending his angels to attend his saints. Thus Abraham told his servant, *The Lord before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee*, Gen. xxiv. 40. And thus God told Moses, *I will send an angel before thee*, Exod. xxxii. 2. And thus Daniel told the king, *My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not hurt me*, Dan. vi. 22. So gracious is that King of heaven, that he will spare his own courtiers out of heaven, and send them on errands to his saints for their preservation ; whence David reasons ; *O taste and see that the Lord is good*, Psal. xxxiv. 7, 8. O the goodness of God.

2. These are other reasons in respect of the angels : As,

1. It is their duty ; not the brightest angel, but is subordinate unto God, and therefore must act and move as the Lord appoints. *This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, and I knew that they were the cherubims*, Ezek. x. 20. The cherubims are glorious angels of great wisdom, strength, and agility, and yet they are subservient to the Lord, and therefore are said to be under the God of Israel. Surely that word of the Psalmist [*They do his pleasure*, Psal. ciii. 21.] It is the very image of true obedience, *q. d.* their ministry not at their own pleasure, but at God's : Now what is God's pleasure but the saints welfare ? *He hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants*, Psal. xxxiii. 27. The angels that know this, stand not upon terms with God ; all they do is but to hearken to the voice of his word, and then they fly ; *Then did the cherubims lift up their wings and the wheels besides them*, Ezek. xi. 22. It is a remark of a divine upon these words, All things are under the God of Israel, he hath the preheminance, he is above wheels, and angels are under him, at his dispose : If he give out the word, the cherubims move, lift up their wings, and order the wheels : If he say, Go and minister to yonder saints, presently they go, as it is their duty.

2. It is their delight to attend the saints, they know that one day they shall live together, and sing together, and rejoice together; they know that the saints shall supply the room of the fallen angels, and when they meet, O the joy that will be betwixt them! In the mean time, it is their desire and delight to attend their partners in heaven's joy, for they are acquainted with God's design, and purpose to save them, they know what Christ hath done and suffered for them; the mystery of godliness is seen of angels, it is so seen, that they take great delight to behold it, yea, are ravished in the very beholding of it, as some new and strange object: Epithumusin, they look into it, saith Peter, their whole spirits are taken up with it, as if it were the blessedest sight that ever they could behold, and they that are so ravished at the work of our redemption, how should they but with delight attend the redeemed ones of Jesus Christ.

3. It is their honour to wait upon the saints. It is true in some respects they are at a higher form, they come nearest to God of all the creatures in the world, and they have kept their cloth of gold unstained six thousand years. O the purity, agility, beauty, glory, sanctity, and excellency of the angels! Man in his greatest honour, advanced to the highest pinnacle of happiness, is yet in many things below the angels; *Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels*, Psal. viii. And yet it is no indignity for them to attend the saints, for herein they are but fellow-workers with God and Christ; *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, John v. 17. My Father is beneficent in preserving saints; and I work by the same power, saith Christ: At first, I created, and still I preserve. Now if God and Christ thus work and wait, well may the angels co-operate with them. It was Paul's honour that he wrought together with God; *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also*, 2 Cor. vi. 1. Servants of God, such as men and angels, cannot but look on it as their glory, to put to their hands in the same work with their sovereign Lord the King of glory: If Christ himself *came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*, Matth. xx. 28. the angels may well think it an honour to imitate him, and to minister also.

3. There are other reasons in respect of saints. As,

1. It is for their consolation; a mighty comfort it is, that other creatures should do them service, that heaven and earth, and all therein should be made for them, and be continued and preserved for their sakes, and yet as if all this were not enough, except the angels also were subservient: That creatures of the highest order, of the finest make, of the noblest spirits, who behold the face of God himself, and are taken up with the immediate enjoyment of his fulness, that they, even they should be destined by Christ the King of saints to minister to his saints; oh, what a comfort is this! If whatsoever things were written afore time, were written for our learning, that we 'thro' patience and comfort of the scriptures might have 'hope,' Rom. xv. 4. Surely this that is written of the angels as concerning their office and ministration must be full of comfort. Indeed reprobates and unbelievers have none of this comfort, alas, they are not within the verge of this blessed text, they have nothing to do with this scripture of heaven's heirs, it is for them, and only for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.

2. It is for their benefit, both of body and soul: Some observe, that were it not for the angels, the devils that are ever seeking to devour, would quickly tear all the bodies of the saints into atoms. We read, how that before Christ's death, the bodies of many were possessed of devils, and when they had torn them Mark. i. 26. by the command of Christ they were dispossessed: But after the great work of our redemption, the devils were more restrained of their power; 'Now shall the prince of this world be 'cast out,' John xii. 31. Christ so bound him in chains by his holy angels, since that time, that now he hath not his liberty as before to hurt the saints: It is true, that he is still in the world and rules in the air, but the good angels so defend our bodies against the evil angels, that they cannot touch an hair to our hurt. and as for our souls, they are in their special care; it is impossible to mention all the benefits that they administer to our minds; they for instance, teach us truths, they open God's will, they reveal secrets and mysteries of grace, and by these means they

they promote the salvation of our souls. Thus they did sometimes by dreams in the night, and sometimes by conference in the day, when they assumed bodies; but now still they admonish our minds, and in a secret unperceivable way they persuade us to the reading, hearing, and obeying of God's word. But of these, and the like services which the angels do to our souls, we shall enlarge another time.

S E C T. IV. *Use of terror.*

Use 1. **W**ELL then: Is the ministering office of the angels not for all, but only for heaven's heirs? What terror is this to the wicked? Alas they have no angels to look to them, or take care of them, they are devoid of the presence and ministry of the heavenly angels, or if they have any inspection of them, it is but a general inspection such as Hagar and Ishmael had, who are set out in scripture as the types of those that are rejected of the Lord. And this I take to be the reason why reprobates live, and are not all suddenly struck dead, to wit, because the angels have some general charge and care of them, that they may be preserved to their condition, but they are not properly guardians of any such men. O wo, wo, wo, to the wicked world, when one wo is past, behold there come two more woes after. As it was with Saul, when God was gone from him, then the Philistines made war against him, and he was sore wounded of the archers, and at last he fell on his own sword and died; So where the angels of God stand afar off, and will not rescue, one wo follows after another, there the evil spirits keep their rendezvous, the devil works in them mightily, they are hoodwinked and besotted, and blinded by the God of this world, having no power so much as to groan, or wish for deliverance; we may say of reprobates, as was said of Saul, An evil spirit is upon them, and God is not with them; they are already taken in the snare of the devil, he hath them in a string, and leads them captive at his will: and no wonder, for they have not those aids, those contrary whisperings, they have not the good angels to conflict with the bad, they have not the Spirit, a new nature, much less the

external helps and guards of holy and blessed angels: Ah woe to these men!

S E C T. V.

Use of Encouragement.

Use 2. **W**HAT encouragement is this to the godly? Tho' the wicked have not such guards, yet the godly are the proper objects of the angels ministry. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them? It is a question that puts all out of question: The wicked indeed are left to the wide world, but God is at charge of giving the saints tutors, and governors, and guardians, here is a mighty encouragement to the people of God. I know not the condition that any saint in the world may be in, wherein we cannot find in scripture some encouragement or other drawn from an angel: Art thou in a journey? so was Abraham's servant when Abraham told him, 'He shall send his angel before thee and prosper thy way,' Gen. xxiv. 7, 40. Art thou in battle, or ready to march against the enemy? so was Israel when the Lord told Moses, 'For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, &c. and I will cut them off,' Exod. xxiii. 23. Art thou in oppression, or under the tyranny of wicked men? so Moses told Edom the Israelites were, 'Thou knowest of all the travail that hath befallen us, how our fathers went down into Egypt, and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers, and when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt,' Numb. xx. 4, &c. Art thou in persecution for religion, and forced to flee for thy life? so was Elijah, when he requested for himself that he might die, and said, 'It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers; and as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise, and eat,' 1 Kings xix. 4, 5. Art thou traduced, maligned, censured, imprisoned, and condemned to death for righteousness sake, or for the truth? so was Daniel, whom God yet delivered by an angel, 'My God hath sent me here, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not

'not hurt me, for as much as before him innocency was found in me,' Dan. vi. 22. And so it was with Peter, 'For behold the angel of the Lord came unto him, and a light shined in the prison,—and when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know certainly that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod,' Acts xii. 7, 11. Art thou amidst a people whom God because of sin hath decreed to destruction? So was Lot whom the angels hastned out of Sodom lest he should be consumed in the iniquity of the city. But I am saved this labour of searching any further into scripture; bishop Hall, a worthy author, hath framed us the variety of their assistance in the same scheme: One while they lead us in our way. as they did Israel, another while they instruct us as they did Daniel; one while they fight for us, as they did for Joshua, another while they purvey for us, as they did for Elijah; one while they fit us for our holy vocation, as they did Isaiah, another while they dispose of the opportunities of our calling for good, as they did of Philip's to the eunuch; one while they foretel our danger, as to Joseph and Mary, another while they comfort us in our afflictions, as they did Christ and his apostles; one while they resist our offensive courses, as they did Moses, another while they encourage us in our devotions, as they did Paul; one while they deliver us from danger, as they did Peter, another while they preserve us from death, as the three children; one while they restrain our presumption, as the cherub before the gate of paradise, another while they excite our courage, as to Joshua, Gideon, and the other judges; one while they cure our bodies, as at the pool of Bethesda, another while they carry up our souls to heaven, as they did to Lazarus. It were endless to instance, in all the gracious offices which the angels perform. And is not here great encouragement to all the saints? The children of princes are not without their guard, no more are God's children; as they have an heavenly Father, so they have an heavenly guard to wait upon them, and to minister unto them. O mighty encouragement!

HOW may this angel-admiration cause the saints to admire at the kindness of the Lord towards them! You darlings of the Almighty, if others regard not, you have cause to wonder at this, that the angels, those created citizens of glory, should receive you in your straits, march after you in your ways, counsel you in your doubts, defend you in your dangers; in a word, that God should charge all his elect angels to shew love and respect unto you, yea, to serve and to minister unto you. Stand amazed at this, O ye saints! the angels are the most glorious creatures in the world, they are the most glistering creatures of heaven, the beautiful companions of Jesus Christ; Job calls them morning stars, in that being newly created, they gave glory to the Creator, even as the birds in spring begin their notes, and sing at break of day; and he calls them sons of God, in that he does use them as children, they are very near to him, they do always attend him, and continually see his face, they have the privilege of sons. 'The morning stars sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy,' Job xxxviii. 7. Now that such creatures should wait on sinful wretches, dust and ashes, worms and not men, it is enough to cast any man in the world into an amazement or astonishment. A wonder it is that any creature, tho' inferior, should be serviceable to man, that by sin has lost his dominion over the creatures; a wonder it is, that the ravens should minister to Elijah, but that all the host of heaven should be abased (if we may speak after the manner of men) to so low a work, that angels should perform offices of respect to the meanest creatures; that an angel cloathed with light and glory should come to Zachary, to Mary, and to the shepherds? What! angels of God to wait upon those who are the most despised and rejected of men? Stand and wonder at this! 'When I consider the heavens, saith David, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained: What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,' Psal. vi. 3, 4, 5.

This indeed is applied to Christ, Heb. ii. 6. 7, 9, 11. Who was made a little lower than the angels, by the sufferings of death, but now is crowned with glory and honour: Yet, saith the apostle, He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; Christ and we are of the same nature, which, tho' in some respect it be lower than the angels, nay, in some respects are we higher than the angels, for the angels wait on the saints, and the angels are not so married to Jesus Christ in a mystical union as the saints and people of God restored to his image are. Admire at this all ye saints! verily there is somewhat in holiness more than the world seeth or knoweth, there is some worth, or excellency, or consanguinity in the saints of Christ; otherwise I cannot think that Christ would set such a guard upon them as his own courtiers. The angels are indeed near in alliance to Christ but the saints are nearer. The angels are God's progeny, the sons of God, and so Christ is their brother, but man is allied nearer to Christ than so, in that man is of God's lineage, and Christ is of man's lineage: And hence it is, that the angels must now stoop, and bow, and wait, and serve, and minister to the saints. Are they not nearer allied than all the angels? Unto which of the angels said he at any time, You are my sons, my kinsmen, brethren, mother, sister, spouse? An angel is constantly called a ministring spirit, but is nowhere read a friend of God, the Son of the Father, the delight of the son of man, the temple of the holy Spirit, wherein the thrice glorious Trinity takes up his mansion. Christians admire, here is enough to cast you into an extasy. Come, view the saint's pedigree, and tell me what you think of it.

The SAINT'S PEDIGREE.

Christ is to us,
 Our Lord, 1 Cor. i. 2.
 Our Friend, Cant. v. 16.
 Our Flesh and Blood, Heb. ii. 14.
 Our Brother, Heb. ii. 17.
 Our Father, Isa. lxiii. 16.
 Our Husband, Rem. vii. 4.

We are to Christ,
 His Servants, Rom. vi. 22.
 His Friends, John xv. 14.
 His Kinsmen, Mark iii. 21.
 His Brethren, John vii. 3.
 His Sons, Gal. iii. 26.
 His Spouse, Sister, Love, Dove, &c. Cant.
 vi. 9.
 We are both,
 One Vine, John xv. 1.
 One Seed, Gal. iii. 16.
 One Temple, Eph. ii. 15.
 One Body, Rom. xii. 5.
 One Spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 17.
 One Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12.

Upon the view of this line, genealogy, pedigree, (call it what you please) methinks, my brethren, we should all cry out, ' Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? for thou hast made him higher than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour, thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet; O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world ! ' Psal. viii. 4, 5, 6, 9.

S E C T. VII.

Use of Magnanimity.

DO angels wait on heaven's heirs? Come then, ye holy ones, and take an holy state upon you, think yourselves too good to abase yourselves to the world, or to sin, or to be slaves of men. Why you are kings, and have a mighty guard, and therefore carry yourselves conformable to your royal dignity. Little do the men of this world know of this or believe this truth, if they see a man to have at his heels a long train of earthly followers, in silks, fattins, golden chains, and such like braveries, Oh how are such sights gazed on? and how are such men usually stiled, Your Greatness, Highness, Excellency? Alas! alas! all is but beggary to the glory of the least of the saints of God, and of their attendants. I see indeed a great deal of glister in some of these earthly state solemnities, yet in their pomp they had need of a fair day, and clear sunshine.

thine, or else half their shew will be lost. But angels (the *saints attendants*) enlighten the greatest darkness, Luke ii. 9. Acts xii. 7. 'Is not their countenance as lightning, and their raiment white as snow?' Mat. xxviii. 3. Oh then how should this elevate the spirits of God's people? Why, think of it, you whom it most concerns. It was an high favour for Mordecai, to have Haman, the great pompous peer of the empire to be his attendant, his lacquey or his footman for an hour: How much more honour is it for you poor worms, to have those mighty peers of heaven, those celestial princes, those servants of the most high God to wait upon you continually? King Solomon in all his royalty, in the midst of this two hundred targets, and three hundred shields of beaten gold, was not like one of the lilies of the field, much less like a saint environed and encompassed with a wall of angels; hence was that saying of Christ, *Despise not one of these little ones*; and why so? because *in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father*, Mat. xviii. 10. The brightest angels that look in the face of God, despise not to attend upon the meanest saints, and how then should any despise them whom the angels honour? How should any think them unworthy of their company or countenance whom the great angels think most worthy of their service and attendance? But especially, how should any presume to wrong the saints, or to rush into God's paradise, such as every true Christian is, where stand the angels of God with a flaming sword which turns every way? It is enough (one would think) to affright all the men in the world from offering any violence to any of God's people. But howsoever they carry, let Christians carry as heaven's heirs, let them walk worthy of God, *who hath called them to his kingdom and glory*, 1 Thess. ii. 11. Let them consider what servitors and ministers God hath appointed to wait on them, and in the name of God let them carry themselves answerably, and be holily magnanimous. Plutarch tells of Themistocles that he accounted it not to stand with his state to stoop down to take up the spoils of the enemy whom he had scattered in flight, but says to one of his followers, You may, for you are not Themistocles. If others mind

earth and earthly things, and can look no higher, yet let the saints, whom the angels wait on, walk above the world, and above all things that are here below. Citizens of Rome might not accept of any other freedom in any other city; they accounted it a dishonour to the freedom of Rome, to take freedom any where in the world besides: You that are free in the kingdom of heaven, and that have the created citizens of heaven to be your life guards, oh do not intangle yourselves with the things of the earth, seek not to be free here, as if you had no better portion. Surely if you understand your own privileges, you are spiritual kings and queens of a better kingdom than this world; you have the privileges of a council, to wit, God's testimonies, Psal. cxix. 24. and the privileges of a guard of full state and strength, to wit, God's angels. Oh how should this elevate your spirits! * Let the saints be joyful * in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds, let the * high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two edged * sword in their hands, to execute vengeance upon the * heathen, at whose command is a legion of angels, *this honour have all his saints.* Psal. cxlix. 5, 6, 7, 9.

S E C T. VIII.

Use of Exhortation.

IS the ministering office of the angels for heaven's heirs! then to your duty of communion with them. Oh improve this ordinance! Why, here is an ordinance of Jesus Christ scarce thought on; the angels minister to saints, and the saints almost, if not altogether, forget their duty which they owe to God and Christ in that respect. What! my brethren, are you ignorant of such an ordinance? or do you know it, and yet are you negligent? If you are simply ignorant, and that your ignorance is of pure negation, and not of evil disposition, it is then high time to discover this mystery of godliness to you, that you may be in the exercise of such duties, yet unknown, or if you know them, and are negligent of them, it is then high time to rouse up your spirits, and to stir up * your pure * minds by way of remembrance, that you may be mind- * ful of the words which were spoken before by the holy * prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of * our

'our Lord and Saviour,' 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2. Howsoever the *cat* stands with you, I beseech you hear, learn, practise, and make use of this present book and work; it is another message that I have from God, another ordinance that I would discover; therefore set your hearts unto all 'the words that I testify unto you this day, for it is not a 'vain thing, but it is for your lives,' Deut. xxxii. 46.

The motives I use shal be only these,

1. Angel-ministration, and our communion with them, is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, it is an institution of Christ, which hath connexed to it some kind of spiritual efficacy, to work on souls. Amongst other intervening mediums, with Laurence, there is one great ordinance, which we have not so much considered of, *viz.* that the good angels, the chariots and the horses, should relieve us as they did *Elisha*; nor is there relief only as to outwards, but in relation to our religious walking, and to our inward man. Were it not sad to lose an ordinance of Jesus Christ? or if it be not lost in respect of the living instruments on their part, yet is it not sad that we should make no use of them? ministers are an ordinance of Christ, they are messengers, interpreters, (even as the angels, and therefore are called angels, Rev. i. 20.) their office is to declare unto man his righteousnesses; to pray men in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God; to gather together the saints to be Christ's paronymphs, to deal about the getting of a wife for the Lamb, to work for the good of saints, and to help to bring in more subjects to the King of the universe, Job xxxiii. 23. 2 Cor. v. 20. Eph. iv. 12. Ministers and angels are in the very same employment: Now, were it not sad that the ministers of Christ should be neglected or despised? What if you have ministers? Is there no use to be made of such an ordinance? The apostle tells you, you cannot have saving knowledge, regeneration, or faith, without their use. I do not speak what God may do extraordinarily, but this is God's ordinary way: 'How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how can they hear without a preacher?' Rom. xix. 4. I may say the same of angels in their way, for they are rational and living instruments, they are ministers of God, &

they administer to us saving truths: An angel told the first news of the gospel, 'Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people,' Luke ii. 10. And shall this ordinance of Christ be without any consideration how we may receive good from it? God forbid.

2. The angels are an ordinance ever present; some other ordinances may be taken from us. Men may take from us our Bibles, teachers, pastors, or they may imprison us where we cannot enjoy them, but they cannot take from us the holy angels. 'When the high priest, and all that were with him, laid hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison, then the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.' And when Peter was in prison sleeping between two soldiers bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison, behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison, and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly,' Acts v. 18, 19, 20. and xii. 6, 7. No prison is so close, no keepers are so vigilant as to keep out angels: Tho' we want, and may want other ordinances, yet we have the angels as an ordinance to walk up and down with us, wheresoever we are, or whithersoever we go. I cannot but remember that speech of a great divine, (Bp. Hall) which at first reading exceedingly stuck with me: The good Lord forgive me, for that amongst my other offences, I have suffered myself so much to forget, as his divine presence, so the presence of his holy angels: It is, I confess, my great sin that I have filled up my eyes with other objects, and have been slack in returning praises to my God for the continual assistance of those blessed and beneficent spirits, which have ever graciously attended me without intermission, from the first year of my conception to this present moment, neither shall ever, I hope, absent themselves from my tutelage and protection, till they shall have presented my poor soul to her final glory. If a good man of an holy gracious spirit was so forgetful of them, at he was fain to cry, *Peccavi*, I confess my great sin,

and

and the good Lord forgive me. Methinks it should be a prevailing motive to work on us, so to converse with them and to perform our respective duties to them, as being ever present; without intermission they wait on us, how is it that days without number we should forget them and their ministration?

3. The angels are an ordinance improving other ordinances of Jesus Christ: In this respect there is no fear of clashing with other ordinances: It is true, that the Lord never calls an assembly to two divers employments at one and the same time, unless they be subservient the one to the other. Hence it is we blame them, who coming into our congregations when some public ordinances are in hand, they betake themselves to their private devotions, and will not reverently (without more ado) compose themselves to join with the assembly in that ordinance of God which is in hand: We would not have ordinances clash, only angel-ministration in religious affairs will not hinder, but further our religious services; and angel-ministration in civil affairs will not hinder but further our civil businesses. 1. In religious services the angels are assistant; it is said that they suggest suitable, seasonable, and pious thoughts at such a time: When Cornelius was praying, he saw an angel saying unto him, *Thy prayers and thy alms are come up as a memorial before God*, Acts x. 4, 5. And while Zecharias was executing the priest's office before God, there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord on the right side of the altar of incense, saying, *Thy prayer is heard*, Luke l. 8, 9, 12. 2. In civil affairs the angels are assistant, Psal. ix. *They shall keep thee in all thy ways*, in thy vocation or particular calling. Now herein is the excellency of such an ordinance, that it is an addition and improvement to all other ordinances, an argument sufficient to bind us to our duties in reference to it.

4. Angel-ministration, and our communion with them, is an ordinance in opposition to Satan's temptations, and our communion with them; it were enough to amaze poor souls to consider the powers and principalities that are against them; were they weak, they were less considerable; but we wrestle not against flesh and blood, saith

‘ the apostle, but against spirits, yea, against spiritual wickedness in heavenlies.’ And yet as great as the power and policy of devils are, they are less in power than the holy angels: ‘ There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,’ Rev. xii. 7, 8. and xx. 1, 2. Now here is the encouragement to our duties, not only God and Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith, but even spiritual substances of good angels, proportionable to the other of bad angels, contend with them, and stand most valiantly on our side.

But what are those duties of communion we owe the angels in this respect? I answer, 1. In general. 2. In special.

1. In general: As is their ministration, so is our duty of communion with them. Now in several ways do they administer to us, and so in several respects do we owe duties to God and them. There is a proportion, (if we can find it out) betwixt their ministration and our duty, and they answer one another as in a glass, face answers face. If they serve us, certainly there is something of service that we owe God and them. As the Lord could say, ‘ If I be a Father, where is mine honour? And if I be a master, where is my fear? Mal. i. 6. So if the angels stand in any such relation towards us, it cannot be, but proportionable or suitable duties are to be performed by us.

2. In special: As the kinds of their ministration differ at several times, so are we to observe their ministration at these times, and to return suitable duties. At first, they minister in one kind, and anon they minister in another kind; as our several needs are at several times, so are their several ministrations in those times. *Ex. gr.* When I was in my mother’s womb they minister thus; and when I was born, and but yet an infant, they ministered thus; and when I was grown, and come to riper years, they minister thus; and when I die, and go out of the world, they

minister

minister thus; and when I shall rise again, and come to judgment, they will minister thus. Now here is my duty. 1. To consider their several ministrations at those several times. 2. To return suitable duties at times seasonable, as I am in their season to perform all other duties.

S E C T. IX.

Use of Direction.

AND this is that special use which I aimed at, and which I had first in my eye when I begun this work; it is an use of direction, wherein I shall first lay down the office of angels, and then our office. First, what they do in their times, and then what we must do in our times, in answer to them and their ministrations. And O that the Lord would bless this work to thee that readest! Oh that he, on whose errand I come, would speak himself to thy soul. For he is able to instruct, yea, when he teacheth, all are scholars.

The Second B O O K.

C H A P. I. S E C T. I.

Of the Time when the Angels first begin their Ministration:

THE first period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, it is from their quickning in the womb till their birth. Come then, and, 1. See the ministration of angels at this time; and, 2. Learn and practise we those several duties that especially concern the saints in that respect.

1. For the ministration of angels in that period, most probable it is, that then they begin their ministration. The exact beginning is indeed questionable: Some would have it to begin at the first hour of conception. They have ever graciously attended me, faith bishop Hall, without intermission from the first infusion of the soul. 'Their care begins, say they, as assoon as the child is quickned in the womb, for that they have then another distinct charge

to look after.' Others at the birth of the elect; God revealing to the angels who are such, by requiring their attendance on them then. From their birth to the end of their life, saith Zanchius, angels are assigned of God to wait on the elect. Others at the baptism of infants: Origen recounting many opinions doth mention this; which is very improbable, for then it is in the power of parents, who set the time of baptism, to say, when the angels shall begin their office over their children, but the elect are precious and dear to God before, as after the ordinance of baptism. Others at the time of conversion. Of which two reasons are given.

1. Because the angels know not the decrees before that election be declared in conversion. But this we deny.

2. Because in the state of nature a man is under the wrath of God, and is vexed with evil spirits that hurry him to sin, and rule in the children of disobedience; but altho' this cannot be denied, yet God is resolved that all his elect shall have invisible supports against Satan, to preserve them carefully as chosen vessels, against the time that he shall manifest himself unto them; and it is sufficient to angels that God wills their attendance, and that hereafter they shall discern some fruit of their attendance. For my part, amidst all these differences I close only with them, who say, that the angels begin the execution of their charge when the soul is infused: And the reasons are solid.

1. Because the child hath then a distinct being of his own.

2. Because then it is a person consisting of soul and body.

3. Because God's providence over soul and body, (of which the angels are servants) taketh date thence. *Thou hast covered one*, saith David, *in my mothers womb*, Psal. cxxxix. 13. The Lord in framing our bodies, and creating our souls in our mother's womb, did then cover his tender work with his mighty power from all inconveniencies as with a shield; and therefore then did the angels begin their ministration.

S E C T. II.

Of the manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.

BUT how do the angels minister at such a time? I answer, They keep, preserve, defend, deliver, sustain and strengthen babes, even in the womb. I cannot think that they have only one office at such a time, but that sometimes they attend them for good, and sometimes they deliver them from evil. The case stands thus; In the creation or infusion of the soul (which is all one, for *creando infunditur, et infundendo creatur*) the angels receive their commission, as if the Lord should say, Come blessed angels, here is a creature that shall at last fill up the room of some fallen angel, and then it shall be like to yourselves, and you shall love it as you love yourselves, but in the mean time, it is my pleasure, that you should minister unto it, and keep it safe. Which no sooner said, but they are prompt and ready to do God's will.

We may wonder at this, that the angels should thus minister to man after his fall, which they never did before. In that collation, betwixt innocent Adam, second Adam, renewed Adam, and old Adam, it is said that the angels did neither minister unto, nor keep the first Adam before the fall, because he was in no danger, only they loved him. The angels indeed ministered to Christ, the second Adam, and loved him, but did not keep him, for he was *Comprehensor* as well as *Viator*. Christ is the head of angels, and therefore he is not kept by them. The angels now minister to the renewed Adam, yea, they love him, and keep him, and yet this argues not any prerogative that the saints have above Christ, but rather their weakness and wants, that they have need of the angels to preserve them, as young children stand in need of nurses to wait upon them. But as for old Adam or wicked reprobates, the angels neither minister to them, nor love them, nor keep them in respect of any special and particular keeping. It may be the angels are sometimes ministers of outward things even to the wicked, as the angels brought down manna in the wilderness to the bad Israelites, as well as good: but they have not that particular care of the wicked, as they have of the elect of God; they come not up and down upon

der, Christ, to ministering to them, as they did to the elect. Now this keeping of the elect, is not only in this life, but all the while that they are in their mothers womb.

S E C T. III.

Experience of this truth.

OF this, as of all the rest, I would give in some experiences for further clearing.

1. An ancient matron having many children, and having left bearing for the space of about twelve years, the Lord then unexpectedly gave her to conceive; she wondered, and apprehending nothing but ill health, purposed on such a day to take physic; but the night before (if I mistake not) she felt the child stir in her womb, and then she brake out as Sarah did; What! 'after I am waxed old, shall I bear a child, my lord being old also?' Gen. xviii. 12. Hereupon the physic was removed, the child preserved, and rightly called Isaac in imitation of old Abraham and Sarah, who laughed at the news of the angel, that they should have a son in their old age, Gen. xvii. 19. and xviii. 12.

2. Three godly women in the isle of Guernsey were condemned to be burnt for their religion, and tho' one of them was great with child, yet found she no favour. As they were all three in the fire, the belly of the woman breaking with the vehemency of the flame, the infant (being a fair man-child) fell into the fire; which being caught and carried to the bailliff, he commanded it to be had back, and thrown into the fire; whereby after it was born, and preserved by the angels, it died a martyr. *Clarke.*

S E C T. IV.

Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.

2. **T**HE duties that concern us in this respect, are either parents duties or childrens. 1. For the parents.

1. Parents may rejoice at this, that the holy angels attend them, and those little pieces and pictures of themselves. You that are mothers great with child, are not sometimes in trouble, fear, and peril? Be not discouraged, for the angels attend your motions, and all occurrences,

reces for the safety and preservation both of you and yours. It is observed that when Mary saluted Elizabeth, 'the babe sprang in her womb for joy, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost,' Luke i. 41. Some think that this springing of the babe was by the presence of an angel with John, otherwise that little embryo had been incapable of such affections and motions, according to the course of nature; and immediately it follows, Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. A serious consideration of the angels ministering to such Embryos, may be a blessed means to fill you with the comforts of God's Spirit. O rejoice in this! Nor is this all; For,

2. Parents ought to pray, not to the angels, but to the God of angels, for the favour, assistance, and protection of the angels to their infants. I know such prayers are not usual, but is not that a neglect of duty to our babes? When David prayed against his enemies, he could say, 'Let the angel of the Lord chase them, and let the angel of the Lord persecute them,' Psal. xxxv. 5, 6. How much more may we say for our tender infants in the womb, Let the angel of the Lord guard them, and let the angel of the Lord keep them. Manoah and his wife were very careful what to do for the babe which must be born to deliver Israel out of the Philistines hands; and therefore after the angel had appeared to the woman, and told her, 'Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God, (or the angel of God) which thou didst send, come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do to the child that shall be born; and God hearkned to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again,' Judg. xiii. 8, 9. Indeed when he came, he would have no burnt offering, offered unto him, but gave direction, 'If thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord,' ver. 16. Angels would not be prayed unto, nor worshipped, Rev. xix. 10, and. xxii. 9. But yet in reference to the angels, we find here Manoah praying, and offering unto the Lord, and if he prayed for angel-direction, how much more may we turn the promises into prayers for angel-protection, and ministration to those poor infants yet unborn.

2. For the children or parties themselves when grown.

1. Let them know and be acquainted with their angel-keepers. When David considered how he was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, and covered in his mother's womb, he cried out, 'Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knows right well,' Psal. cxxxix. 14. It is enough to have angel-keepers before we are born, but in time we should endeavour to know them. It is sad to be ignorant still of such a glorious truth. Surely God would have us acquainted with his works, and to bear witness of what we know to his glory.

2. Let them praise God for the angels ministring to them in the womb. Thou art he, said David, that took me out of the womb, Psal. xxii. 9. and thou art he that preserves me in the womb. 'The Lord doth many things for us, which at that time when he doth them, we cannot observe; it is our duty therefore to look upon them afterwards, that they may furnish us with matter of praise to God? But why is not praise rendered to the angels as well as to God? Because God will not give his glory to another. Angels must have their due, but they must not rob God of his praise; whatsoever instruments and means the Lord makes use of, the spiritual eye pierceth through them, and looks on God, and gives him all the glory. You that hear of this angel-ministration in the womb, O praise the Lord! it is, if you rightly apprehend it, a smothered wonder, and so glorious a work of God, that he deserves perpetual praise from you for that one work. 'Thou art he that preserved me in, and took me from my mother's bowels; my praise shall be continually of thee,' Psal. lxxi. 6.

3. Let them act their faith, and trust in God, even because of this: To this end are all the experiences of God's love to his saints, that they might stir up their faith, and trust God more. O then among other experiences of God's dealings, make use of this for enlightning of your faith! 'Thou art my hope, O Lord God; thou art my trust from my youth, by thee I have been holden up from the womb,' Psal. lxxi. 5, 6. As Satan makes assault after as-

fault

faul against faith, so should we raise bulwark against bulwark, for defence thereof. After we have looked upon other men's experiences, we should recount our own experiences of God's care towards us, and make use of all God's dealings for our strengthening. Thus Lord thou didst for me in my youth, and childhood, and infancy. Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast, I was cast upon thee from the womb, thou art my God from my mother's belly; yea, in the womb before I was born, thou didst cover me, and guard me by the angels, and therefore how should I but believe? How am I forced to acknowledge that the Lord never leaves me, even when I least perceive his presence? Psal. xxii. 9, 10. Here's mighty encouragement for faith.

4. Let them love God and his angels, for this early ministration of the angels. Antient love is a loadstone of love; were it but a little love, yet long love might beget love again. Why, God hath loved us from everlasting, and the angels have loved us from our first beginning, and therefore how should we but love them again? David's consideration of God's mercy towards us in the womb, took up his heart and ravished his Spirit, yea, he was so exceedingly taken with it, that he could not off it: 'Thine eye did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them; how precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them? If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with thee,' Psal. cxxxix. 16, 17, 18. Oh that our souls were awaked, and oh that our spiritual senses were renewed, that upon a serious consideration of God's love, and of the angels love to us in the womb, we might love again, and in a holy pang cry out, How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God? and how precious are your thoughts unto me, O ye angels of God?

C H A P. II. S E C T. I.

Of the Ministration of Angels in our Infancy and Child hood

THE second period, wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, it is from their birth to their youth.

or

or riper years: This takes up the time of infancy and childhood. And in prosecution of this, first set we the object before us at this time, and secondly, learn and practise we those several duties that will naturally flow from such an object.

1. For the object, *viz.* the ministration of angels in our infancy and childhood. The scriptures are express, 'take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven,' Mat. xviii. 10. By little ones, I do not exclude the adult; who resemble little children in some imitable qualities; nor would I exclude little children, whom our Saviour propounds as a pattern for the imitation of the adult, ver. 2—6. But I would rather take all in, and say, That by little ones is meant either those who are little in stature, as the child set in midst of them, or little in grace, parts, esteem, as some of the disciples were; or little in their own eyes, as all the elect are, or must be. All these have their angels, and therefore none of these must be despised. When Christ was but a babe, 'the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there until I bring thee word,' Mat. ii. 13. And when Herod was dead, 'the angel appeared again to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise and take the young child with his mother, and go into the land of Israel,' ver. 19, 20. Thus was Christ provided for in his cradle by an angel. When Hagar had not wherewithal to feed her child, 'She cast the child under a shrub, and she went and sat her down over against him a good way off, saying, Let me not see the death of the child; and she sat over against him, and lift up her voice and wept, and God heard the voice of the lad, and then the angel of the Lord called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee Hagar? fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is, arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make of him a great nation; and God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled her bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.'

'drink,' Gen. xxi. 16—19. Here was an angel calling, comforting, and directing Hagar in her child's behalf; and yet Hagar and Ishmael were not elect. When Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, he said, 'The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless (or keep) the lads,' Gen. xlviii. 16. Many think this was the angel of the covenant to whom Jacob prayed for a blessing on Joseph's sons, and the rather because he is said to *redeem him from all evil*, which is properly peculiar to Jesus Christ; but others say, that this form of prayer was only an interpretative kind of imploration, that God would bless or keep Joseph's sons by his angels; and of that of redeeming, if this was spoken of eternal redemption, it were indeed peculiar to Christ, but Jacob, saith Dingley, speaks here of redemption and deliverance from temporal evils, which is confessed to be a main office of angels. And Chrysostom, Basil, Rivius, Mercerus (as he cites them) quote this very place for the deputation of angels.

S E C T. II.

Of the manner of Angel Ministration at that Time.

BUT how do the angels minister to us in our childhood? I answer,

1. They keep us from evil. Were it not so, into how many dangers should we fall? Indeed a wonder it is, that most children are not disfigured, and lamed with bruises and fearful miscarriages, with cutting and burning themselves, as hundreds and thousands of opportunities are offered, but that angels are very diligent to keep them out of harm's way. *When father and mother forsake me*, saith David, *then will the Lord take me up*, Psal. vii. 10. When parents are without natural affection, when nurses are careless, and children of restless, stirring, climbing dispositions, then doth the guardianship of angels especially appear. To this purpose is Chemnitius cited by the fore-said author, saying, Infants are obnoxious to such and so many dangers, that no anxiety of parents, or diligence of servants can secure them without the tuition of angels. And Gerson observes the like, Whence is it, saith he, that little children are preserved from so many perils of their infancy, as fire, water, falls, suffocation, but by the agency of angels?

2. They

2. They keep us in health. Some say, that much physic should not be administred to infants, it is not safe to be too much tampering with such tender things, and I suppose there is less need, in that angels themselves are instead of physicians to such weak patients. It is Mr. Dyke's sayings, Angels help to remove diseases and evils, as the devil helps to bring them on us. And to that purpose they may have an hand in the use of such means as are for our bodily health. Angels are the rock, saith the same author, of babes and sucklings, their invisible hands are doing for them when we little think of any such matter. It may be some are sick, and yet recover, and we attribute it to this or that means, when indeed the instrument was an heavenly angel. Certainly, said our divine Seneca, bishop Hall, there are many events wherein common eyes see nothing but nature, which yet are effected by the ministration of angels. As when sudden cures were wrought at the pool of Bethesda, it might perhaps be attributed by many to some beneficial constellation, but we know out of the Evangelist, that an angel descended and moved the water, and made it healing. Where we find a probability of second causes in nature, we are apt to confine our thoughts from looking higher, yet even then there are many times unseen hands. How much more when the work is above the power of any secondary cause? This carries its own evidence without dispute, that if it be not of nature, it must needs be of an higher efficiency, *ex. gr.* Have ye seen a poor weak child raised up from deadly sickness when all natural helps have given him up? Then have the angels of God been his secret physician.

3. They teach and tutor us. Some think that angels help little infants to speak and go, but howsoever they are as tutors and schoolmasters to them. Zanchy compares them first to nurses, and then to schoolmasters, that they may instruct them, admonish them, correct them, comfort them, defend them from all evil, and incite them to all good. Amidst all their offices (which are almost infinite) this I believe is the angels care of little children, that they be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Eph. vi. 4. Heaven is the place whence many
good

good angels are fallen, and the good angels would have these places filled up again with saints. Hence they take care especially of their souls, tacitly revealing to them the mysteries of grace, not so, as if the angels office were to preach the word; that ministry is not committed to them, but to the apostles, and others called to it; but it is at least the angel's care, that both children and adult should be taught in the church by men appointed and prepared by the angels. Thus the angel spake to Philip, when he was to preach the gospel to the eunuch, saying, Arise and go towards the south. And another angel spake to Cornelius, saying, 'Send to Joppa, and call for one Simon 'Peter, who shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do,' Acts viii. 20. and x. 6. If the angels are not our ordinary preachers, lest they dazzle us, (their brightness being unsuitable to our weak conditions) yet are they God's instruments to provide preachers for us, that by them we may be instructed in the law of God, and the mysteries of the gospel. And something more the angels do, in that they suggest to infants pious thoughts, and tacitly provoke them to a pious life, and draw out of them such gracious holy words, that the Psalmist's saying is verified, 'Out of the 'mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength,' Psal. viii. 2. Mat. xxi. 16. Thus when the children cried in the temple, Hosanna to the son of David, and therefore the priests and Scribes were sore displeased, Jesus made their apology, saying, 'Have ye never read, out of the 'mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise?' Certainly those Hosannas of the children were above nature, or acquired parts, or parents education, and therefore they were taught them by the angels.

S E C T. III.

Experience of this Truth.

E X P E R I E N C E of this truth.

I. For keeping us from evil.

An infant being laid in his bed with some servants, he was near morning found out of the bed among wooden and iron tools, enough to have killed him, he was taken up cold, yet without any harm, and being laid in the warm bed he revived, and so was graciously preserved.

A child

A child fell into a river of water, and being carried down the stream, was at last taken up for dead; but after some time he revived, and next day I saw him, and telling him that God had given him a new life, the child wept, I desired him to remember it, improve it, and to thank God for that mercy all his days.

A child playing by the side of a pond, fell into it, where it was like to perish. Near the pond was an house, where only was one man reading a book, but it pleased God that he was suddenly so troubled, tho' he knew not for what, that he could read no longer; whereupon he walked up and down the room, but could not be quiet; then he walked forth and espied a straw hat swimming upon the water, and looking earnestly, he saw the child rise to the top of the water, and so catching hold of it, he drew it out, and saved its life. *White.*

There was a maid who lived with her mother in Bargamus, and was in one and the same night by a strange wonder brought into the city of Venice; they in the family where she arrived, were near allied to her, and coming in the morning into the chamber where she was, and finding her unexpectedly stark naked, without any linen, not so much as a rag to cover her, gently demanded of her, how she came thither? where her cloaths were? and what was the cause of her coming? The poor girl being much ashamed, and mixing her blushes with many tears, made answer to this purpose: This very night, said she, when I lay betwixt sleep and awake in bed, I perceived my mother steal softly from my side, thinking I had not seen her, and stripping herself of all her linen, she took from her closet a box of ointment, which opening, she anointed herself therewith under the arm pits, and some other parts of the body, which done, she took a staff, which stood ready in a corner, which she had no sooner bestrid, but in the instant she rid (or rather flew) out of the window, and I saw her no more: At which being much amazed, and the candle still burning by me, I thought in myself to try a childish conclusion, and rising from my bed, took down the same box, and anointing myself, as I had before observed her, and making use of a bedstaff in the like manner,

ner, I was suddenly brought hither in a moment, where I was no sooner entred, but I espied my mother in the chamber with a knife in her hand, with purpose (as I thought) to kill this my young nephew, (pointing to a child in the cradle) but she was hindred by finding me here, who no sooner saw me, but she began grievously to threaten me, and came near to strike me, in which fear I began to call upon God to help me, whose name I had no sooner uttered, but she instantly vanished, and I am left here, even as you found me. Whereupon her kinsman, the master of the house, writ down, and keeping the maid still with him, sent to the inquisitor of the place, where the mother of the girl, his kinswoman, lived in good reputation, and no way suspected; before whom she was called and questioned (as the manner of that country is upon the like probability and suspicion) put to the mercy of the tormentor, and at length she confessed every particular before mentioned; to which she added, that she had no less than fifty sundry times been transported by the devil, only with a malicious intent to kill that young child; but she found him always at her arrival so guarded by angels, and by the blessings and prayers of his devout and religious parents, that she had no power over him. *Barthol. Spineus.*

2. For preserving of health and life.

A child being begotten and born of antient, sickly and diseased parents, was hereditarily infirm, and so oppressed with childrens maladies, that the physician concluded he could not be long lived; whence the father drawing nigh to his death, and making his will, gave him such a portion in case he should live till the age of fourteen years; weak he was, and many sicknesses he had, and yet still the Lord raised him up, and unexpectedly restored him to health and strength, that he passed over those fourteen years, and yet lives, oh that it may be to God's glory, and the church's edifying.

At the taking of Bolton by P. Rupert, amongst others then slain, there was one William Itherwood, and his wife, and Felice their daughter, being then but eleven weeks old, lay piteously crying at the breast of her dead mother; but it so pleased God, that an old woman, the wife

wife of one Ralph Helue, of the same town; aged about seventy years, who had not given suck above twenty years before, seeing and hearing the child, compassionate and took it up, and having neither food for herself, nor for the infant in that common calamity, to still the child, she laid it to her breast; and behold the goodness of God, who provides for the young ravens that cry, the child sucking, milk came into her breast, wherewith she nourished it, to the admiration and astonishment of all beholders.

Isenbard, an earl in Swevia, had to wife one Jermundis, who grievously accused one of her neighbours of adultery, because she had been delivered of six children at a birth; but it so fell out afterward, that herself (her husband being abroad in the fields) was delivered of twelve children, all males. She fearing the like infamous punishment, that by her instigation had been inflicted on the former woman, commanded the nurse to kill eleven of them. The nurse going to execute the will of her lady, was met by her lord, then returning homewards: He demanded what she carried in her lap, she answered, Puppies; he would needs see them, and opening her apron, found the infants. Whereupon he examined the matter, found out the truth, enjoined the nurse to be secret, and to put the children to some nurse abroad; and when they were six years old, he made a feast, apparelled the young boys alike, and presented them to their mother, she misdoubting the truth, confessed her fault, obtained pardon, and owned her children. *Heylin.*

A minister in the late rebellion in Ireland, flying for his life to Dublin, his wife and children followed after him; in their journey being very weary, they all agreed, when night came on, to sit down together under the lee of an Irish mountain, for it was frost and snow: The minister's wife had a young child called John Teare hanging upon her breasts, which were become dry thro' her manifold griefs and want of sleep three nights together; the child cried and groaned, and for want of nourishment, was ready to die; in such sort, that the sad mother, not being able to endure the groans and cries of her babe, arose up
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from the company (who sat all together as close as they could, with children in their laps, to keep one another warm) purposing to leave her child by himself, that she might be freed from those heart-piercing sobs and wailings. And here behold the Lord who hath promised to be seen of his servants in the time of need, appeared even literally in this mount; for as she stooped down with a bleeding heart, and eyes full of tears, there to leave her little one upon the ground, she spied, or rather felt upon the rock (it being then something dark, only the snow cast some little light) a sucking-bottle, which she opening, tasted of what was within it, and found it to be full of good milk, which the Irish call *bonny clabbo*; she put it to the child's mouth, with fear, lest he never having sucked before out of any bottle besides the breast, would not draw it; but he readily sucked his belly full, and fell asleep. The mother heretofore astonished, returned unto the company, and shewed them what she had found; who much admired it, how or whence that bottle could come thither, considering that the place was far from any habitation at all, and the vessel lay upon the top of the snow lately fallen; but some of them called to mind Hagar's story, and related it to the rest, how that 'when she was wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba, the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast her child under one of the shrubs, and went and sat her down a good way off, for she said, Let me not see the death of the child, and she lift up her voice and wept; and then God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of the Lord called unto Hagar out of heaven, and God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, whereat she filled the bottle, and gave the lad drink,' Gen. xxi. 15—17. These things compared and laid together, afforded them matter of thankfulness to God, for his providence, and of more comfort than any feast could have done: From whence they concluded (as if the angel had spoke to them as well as Hagar) that they should not fear, and that God who had so wonderfully preserved the infant, would in like manner preserve them all: Which accordingly came to pass; for the next day they came to Virginia, where they all found free, unexpected, and

plentiful refreshing, even a table in the wilderness, and within two or three days after, they came safe to Dublin, their desired harbour. *Dr. Teate.*

3. For teaching or tutoring of infants.

A child being very young, much affected his antient and reverend father with his reading of the bible, and with his questions and answers; which drew from his father these very words, That if the child but lived, he verily believed he would suck in learning, as a child doth milk. This minds me of what was said of Origen (in whom was certainly much of the angels tutoring) that his father brought him up from his childhood most studiously in all good literature, but especially in the reading and exercise of holy scripture, wherein he had such inward and mystical speculation, that many times he would move questions to his father of the meaning of this place or that place in scripture; in so much that his father divers times would uncover his breast being asleep, and kiss it, giving thanks to God, who had made him so happy a father of such an happy child. This Origen being but yet a child, would needs have suffered martyrdom with his father Leonides, had not his mother privily in the night season conveyed away his cloaths and his shirt; whereupon more for shame to be seen, than for fear to die, he was constrained to remain at home; yet then he wrote a letter to his father with these very words, *Dave tibi, ne quid propter nos aliud quam martyrii constanter faciendi, propositum cogites*, Euseb. l. 6. c. 3.

In the primitive persecutions, we read of one Romanns, who first being scourged with whips, with knaps of lead at the end, instead of tears, sighs, and groans, he sung psalms all the time of his whipping, and after, his face being buffeted, his eye-lids torn with nails, his cheeks cut with knives, and his teeth struck out, that his pronunciation, at least might be impaired whilst he preached Christ, he only said, I thank thee, O persecutor, that thou hast opened to me many mouths, whereby I may preach my Lord and Saviour: Look how many wounds I have, so many mouths I have to praise my God. But being reviled that Christ his God was but of yesterday, and that
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the gods of the gentiles were of great antiquity, he made a long oration of the eternity of Christ; which done, he said, Give me a child but of seven years old, which age is free from malice and other vices, wherewith riper age is commonly infected, and you shall hear what he will say: His request was granted, a pretty boy was called out of the multitude, and set before him: Tell me (quoth the martyr) whether thou thinkest it reason that we worship one Christ, and in Christ one Father, or else that we worship infinite gods? Unto whom the babe answered, that certainly whatsoever it be that men affirm to be God, he must needs be one, which one is one and the same; and in as much as this one is Christ, of necessity Christ must be the true God; for that there be many gods, we children cannot believe. And after this was the babe martyred. Fox martyrology.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Duties that concern us in this Respect.

FOR the several duties that concern us in this respect they are such as these.

1. Let us know our privileges which God in Christ gives us from our birth: The angels were appointed our guardians in the womb, and they have guarded, preserved and tutored us in our infancy and childhood. Many a time were we in great danger of fire, and water, and falls, and suffocations; many a time have we been in the extremity of sicknesses, and very near to death. Many a lesson have we had taught us, and many a motion and holy thought hath been suggested to us, and is not all this worth our notice, knowledge and understanding? Did we but see little children of poor men waited on by a guard of rich, noble, strong and valiant men, would not all admire? But if we knew this to be our own condition, that when we were babes and sucklings, and could not discern between our right hand and left, that we had then a guard full of state and strength, even of angels themselves, would not this fill us with the sense of the goodness of God? Certainly it concerns us to know thus much, that we may better know the goodness of our God in thus providing for us: 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them

‘that fear him, saith David,’ Psal. xxxiv. 7, 8. O come, and taste, and see that the Lord is good. God would not have his favours unregarded: For if we know them not, never shall we attain to conceive of God himself, especially in his goodness love and mercy towards us. But of these more particularly in another section.

2. Pause a while, and to every particular ministration in our infancy, set we a Selah. This was the manner of David in his Psalms; when some especial thing worthy attention or observation was delivered, he added Selah, that by a little stop or pause of the breath, the matter, worth or excellency of the thing might be considered. Methinks it is sad, that the angels should do such excellent offices for us, as mothers, nurses, physicians, tutors, and that either we should forget them, or not seriously consider and pause upon them. In other things of lesser consequence, we can speak with delight, *olim meminisse juvabit*; but are not these passages of God’s providence, whereof the angels are especial instruments (as to keep us from evil, to preserve us in health, to teach us God’s will in our infancy or childhood) of far more excellency, profit and delight? O then let us set a star at the margin of such notes, and whilst we either read or sing them, yet let us stop a while, that we may dwell upon them, and see the want of them on all sides: Let us say with Jacob when he saw the ladder on which angels ascended and descended, Surely the Lord (or the angel of the Lord) was in this place (or in this passage) and I knew it not, Gen. xxvii. 16.

3. Bless we our God for his free love to us in our first and ignorant times: Whilst we were infants, we could neither deserve nor desire such a glorious guard, and yet even then had the angels a charge to keep us from evil, to keep us in health, and to be our tutors: O adore we this free grace! Say we as the sweet singer of Israel, ‘O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens: Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou founded praise,’ Psal. vii. 1, 2. Very children themselves could sing Hosanna to Christ by the help of angels, which occasioned him

to cite this text, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise,' Mat. xii. 16. Most rightly it is said, Out of the mouths, because they spake not from their understanding, but by his virtue, and ministration of the angels, their tender tongues were led to speak those words. How much more should we that are adult, and of capacity to understand our duty; I say, how much more should we praise him by the help of angels? for the help and ministration of his angels? Come, and sing we an Hosanna to him; set we the crown upon the head of free love, free grace. Let us join with angels to bless God for his angels, and for their ministration in our infancy and tender years. Is there no cause in regard of the freeness of this love? It was bestowed on men unmerited, undesired, and placed on him in infancy, yea even in the dark womb.

4. Live up to the mercies we received when we discerned little or nothing of them. If any friend do me a kindness unknown to me, I shall take it kindly and exceeding kindly, when I know it; and if before I was unable to requite, yet when I am able, I should think myself strongly engaged to retaliate. Surely thus it is with the people of God; our friends, the heavenly angels waited on us, in our infancy and childhood, but we neither saw them, nor had them in our thoughts; notwithstanding they went on in the discharge of their office, and sometimes they were as nurses, other whiles as tutors and school-masters to us. And now that we know this, now that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and of his angels shines in our hearts, oh, how should we live up to those mercies? How should we gratify the angels, who have been thus to us, and have done all this for us? The angel that appeared to Gideon under an oak, was for the present unknown, but when he had caused fire to rise up out of the rock, and to consume the flesh, and the unleavened cakes, then Gideon perceived that he was an angel and said, Alas! O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face: Upon this, God was pleased to encourage him, saying, Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die: And then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord,

and throw down the alter of Baal and cut down the grove by it, and afterwards became a judge over Israel till he died. Angels presence and encouragement once discovered and made known, are enough, through the blessing of God, to work in us a fear of God, and obedience to his laws.

CHAP. III. SECT. I.

Of the Ministration of Angels in our riper Years.

THE next period wherein the angels minister to heaven's heirs, it is from their riper years unto their death. And in order to this, we shall first observe their ministration; and secondly, our duties.

1. For their ministration, I shall follow the same method as before.

1. That it is so, the scriptures abundantly prove, Psal. xxxiv. 8. and xci. 11, 12. xix. 15, 16. 2 Kings vi. 16, 17. If I may give instances, Lot was led out of Sodom by an angel; Daniel was taught by an angel; Cornelius was answered by an angel; an angel appeared to Joseph, Mary, Zachary, Peter, Paul, on several errands. Scarce any remarkable thing befel the people of God, but it was accomplished by the ministry of angels. But what needs more? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

SECT. II.

Of the Kinds of Angel ministration at that Time, as to our Bodies.

FOR the kinds of their ministration, it runs in several streams; as first, to our bodies: Secondly to our souls.

1. For our bodies

1. They keep us from evil. ~~As~~ they did in our infancy but now they do it with this limitation, 'they keep us' 'all our ways, Psal. xc. 11. &c. in all those courses appointed us by God. The devil left out that clause in the psalm when he set Jesus Christ on a pinnacle of the temple, and tempted him to cast himself down; he told him the promise, That the angels should keep him, but he omitted the main point, In all his ways. Certainly there is some special treasure inclosed in this, or the devil would never have

have concealed it from our Saviour; then we may expect angel-protection when we are in the ways God hath appointed us. It was no way for Christ to cast himself down headlong from the pinnacle, for the way lay down the stairs. If we keep not in our ways, neither will the angels keep us from external evils. The prophet that went out of his way, and beyond his bounds, appointed him by God, a lion met him by the way and slew him, 1 Kings xiii.

24.

Quest. But do not many external evils befall God's people, even walking in their ways and courses, appointed them by God? I answer,

It cannot be denied, but that sometimes such things do befall the godly. Mephibosheth, a child of five years old, son to a good father, and afterwards a good man himself, was lamed by a fall from his flying nurse, Satan was permitted by God to destroy the goods, children and health of Job, tho' by the spirit of God he was stiled 'a perfect' and an upright man, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil, and that there was none like him in the earth, Job i. 8. and ii. 3. The Lord, say some can countermand angelical protection, and give instruction to these powers (in some cases) to suspend their attendance and care of us, yet the promise is not null, and of none effect: For,

1. Angelical attendance doth mitigate the evil, so that God's people do not utterly miscarry; they may be troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted but not forsaken: Cast down, but not destroyed, 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. Angels are not always to keep us from, but sometimes in troubles; Christ could have prayed that many legions of angels should have kept him from suffering, this he did not, yet the angels ministered unto him in the wilderness, and in the garden, where he sweat drops of blood.

2. The promise of angel protection (as all temporal promises) runs with this tacite reservation and condition 'always provided, that God in his infinite wisdom, or reasons best known to himself, did not judge the contrary more conducive to his glory, and our inward good. We

know Job was afflicted that he might be tried, and th Lord doth sometimes suspend the protection of an gel that we may the more depend upon himself. As the nurse gets behind the screen, that the infant may go into the mother's arms without crying; if the angels do not help us, it is that we may call upon God for aid. *Dingley and Fuller.*

2. They keep us in health. So they did in our infancy, but the promise runs without limitation to every age in our life. 'Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisom pestilence;—a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand but it shall not come nigh thee.' And the reason follows. For he shall give his angels charge over thee; and the conclusion is this, 'With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation,' Psal. xci. 3. and vii. 11, 16. It is the opinion of good divines, that good angels help to remove diseases, and conserve bodily health, and on the contrary, evil angels are God's instruments of inflicting sore and grievous maladies. As in the midst of his agonies the Lord Jesus saith Dr. Manton, was comforted and refreshed by an angel, Luke xxii. 43. so are the angels with the faithful, helping and easing them in their sicknesses.—For my own part, saith Baxter, I believe that God's works on the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate, and that good angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body, and that evil angels are instruments of inflicting his judgments both corporal and spiritual. Hence God is said to send evil angels among the Israelites, Psal. lxx. 49. Hence Satan did execution on the children, cattle, and body of Job; so then I judge that Satan is the instrument in our ordinary diseases, &c. And I may add on the same grounds, that the angels are instruments in continuing or restoring our bodily health. The ministry of angels, saith Zanchy, is for the promoting of our health, I mean not only the health of our soul, but also of our bodily health. No question but the devils, who are our enemies, and continually stand about us, would quickly rush upon our bodies, and her tear them, or affect them with divers maladies, but that

that the good angels do defend us by divine command. I cannot deny, but that God sometimes afflicts men by the ministry of his holy and blessed angels, for Sodom was destroyed by the angels, and Sennacherib's host was slain by the angels; and David saw the angel of the Lord, having a drawn sword in his hand, and stretched out over Jerusalem; and an angel of the Lord smote Herod, and he was eaten of worms: But this is not God's ordinary dispensation towards his saints. Surely their ordinary employments, and wherein they delight, is according to the promise, *He shall give his angels charge over thee.*

3. They carefully furnish us with all other necessities of this life. Thus when the Israelites were in the wilderness, they were provided for by the angels, *Man did eat of angels food, he sent them meat to the full*, Psal. lxxvii. 20. or as others translate, *Man did eat of the bread of the mighties, he sent them meat to satisfy*; it is all one, for what is the bread of the mighties, but the bread of the angels which are mighty strength! And manna is called their bread either because it came from heaven, the habitation of the angels, or because it was excellent, so as the angels, if they needed any food, might eat it or especially, as I think, because God sent it by the ministry of angels, they were the purveyors of it for the Israelites. Thus when Elijah went into the wilderness, and lay and slept under a juniper tree, 'behold an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise, and eat, and he looked, and behold there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head, and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him, and said, Arise, and eat,' 1 Kings xix. 5, 6, 7. The same God that provided for him in the time of drought, by the ministry of ravens, now again fed him by the ministry of angels. I know these provisions were miraculous, but where no miracles are, the angels have an hand even in the ordinary provisions. 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about those that fear him?' And what then? 'O fear the Lord ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him; the young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord'

' Lord shall not want any good thing.' I know we see not the angels providing for us. but what then? Abraham's servant saw no angel going along with him, and yet Abraham could say, ' The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, he shall send his angel before thee,' Gen. xxiv. 7, 40. The Israelites saw no angel going along with them, and yet the Lord could say, ' I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanites,' &c. Exod. xxxiii. 2. For my part, I see no angel removing me from place to place, yet I am fully persuaded, that no minister of Christ removes his station, or goes to a people as their pastor, but an angel of God, or the God of angels doth so order it: This is the office of angels, saith Zanchy, by a command of God to send the doctors of the church to such or such a people. Accordingly it was an angel that appeared to Paul in a vision by night, saying, *Come over to Macedonia and help us*, Acts xvi. 9. Eusebius tells a like story of Alexander bishop of Jerusalem, that after his agonies and constancy of confession shewed in the persecution of Severus, he was admonished by a vision in the night season to make his journey up to Jerusalem, and drawing near to the city, a vision with plain words was given to certain chief heads of Jerusalem to go out of the gates of the city, and there to receive the bishop appointed them by God. And tho' vision or revelation I have none, yet as the most reverend doctör bishop Hall said, Since I am convinced that the unfelt hands of the angels are in many occurrences of my life, I have learned so much wit and grace, as rather to yield them too much than too little stroke in ordering all my concernments for this life. It is true, their appearings are ceased, but not their workings; their converse is not so sensible, yet it is as real as ever it was before.

S E C T. III.

Of the kinds of Angel-ministration at that Time, as to our Souls.

FOR our souls. 1. The angels declare to us what is the will and mind of God. Thus Daniel being troubled with the visions of his head, he went near unto
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one of the angels that stood by, and asked him the truth and meaning of them, *So he told me, saith Daniel, and made me know the interpretation of the things, Dan. vii. 16.* And in another vision, when Daniel sought the meaning, 'Behold there stood before me, saith he, as the appearance of a man, and I heard a man's voice upon the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. And he said unto me, Understand, O son of man, &c. Dan. viii. 15, 16, 17. And another time the man Gabriel whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation, and informed him, and talked with him, and said, *O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.* Nothing is more usual in God's word, than for angels to inform the saints what is the will and mind of God; the conception of Christ, and his return to judgment, were all told by the angels; only you may look upon these as extraordinary and apparitions of angels, and such teachings or enlightnings of our understanding in these days you cannot expect. All this I grant, and yet withal I add, that if visibly they do not teach us, they may do it invisibly: yea, and I verily believe they do it in ordinary, though invisibly, teach and instruct all the people of God.

But how can that be, when they do neither speak to us, nor reason with us after the manner of men?

I answer, they have other ways of speaking, or of reasoning with us. As,

1. They understand us, tho' we neither speak to them, nor reason with them: Dr. Goodwin, one of our light, in his *Child of light walking in darkness*, tells us that evil angels know much within us, and to that purpose they have more advantages than we men have to know one another by. For,

1. Those spirits can discern all corporeal actions, and tho' the species in them, and their manner of knowing corporeal things differ from ours, yet they are analogical with ours.

2. They make it their business to study men, it is their

trade to go up and down, and consider men: 'Hast thou 'not considered, says God to Satan, my servant Job?' Job i. 8.

3. They are and can be present at all our more retired actions? they are with us at bed and board, in all companies, and in all solitary places.

4. By what they see outwardly of our actions, they may guess at our inwards, which are as the principles of them.

5. They have an insight into the fancy, and the images therein, which follow and imitate the inward thoughts of the mind, as the shadow doth the body: In this respect they go into a room further than we can go, yea, into a room next to the privy chamber, which yet remains fast locked up unto them. This last goes beyond all the former; and yet, saith my author, all divines grant, that the devils may know and discern our phantasms *intuitive* as we do things that are present before us.

6. As they may see into the fancy, so if God permit, evil angels may go into the head, and see those very images and species in the fancy, that are for present in direct conjunction with the understanding, and which is then thinking and musing of. Indeed the immediate knowlege of our thoughts, and hearts, and understandings, is proper only to God; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins*, Jer. xvii. 10. Yet *argutive*, and as they do *transfire*, and appear in the images of the fancy, and so *quasi in alis*, and mediately they may be very far discerned, and look'd into by evil angels, and so by discerning those very phantasms, which the understanding actually at present vieweth, and maketh use of, they may then judge what it is, that the mind for the present is musing on. All this is discuss'd at large concerning the evil angels.

And if the evil angels may know thus much of what is within us, do not the good angels know thus much? The evil angels have by their sin lost much of their knowlege, and therefore are called, *Darkness*, and the power of darkness, because they are exceeding dark in themselves, and in comparison of the holy angels; but the good angels never sinned, and therefore never were deprived of the least measure

measure of knowledge conferred on them. I must therefore conclude that without speaking to them, or reasoning with them after the manner of men, they understand as well, or wherein they do not, God is pleased often to discover it to them by an especial dispensation of his favour and grace. As to the angel in Daniel, was revealed the mystery of the seventy weeks.

2. We may understand them, tho' they never speak to us, or reason with us, and so we are capable of their teaching: You may say, How may we do that? I answer,

1. Observe we their work upon our fancies, there they are busy day and night, to set together the images of our understanding of them. Look as a Compositor in printing takes his letters that ly confused before him, and orders, and sets them in words and sentences, to represent to the reader's eye what he would have read by him: So do the angels set and compose the images in our fancies to represent to the understanding such things as they would have us know; it is good therefore to observe their work day and night, for they may work on our fancies in our dreams.

2. Set we ourselves to think or muse upon those images set together by them. Thus when the angel Gabriel saluted Mary, it is said, *That she cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be*, Luke i. 29. And after the angels had appeared to the shepherds, and that all wondred at those things which the shepherds told them, it is said, that *Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart*, Luke i. 19. Certainly it is our duty, when angels have been communicating their minds to us, to ponder, and muse, and meditate, and to cast in our mind what manner of communication this should be.

3. Try we their works upon our fancies, whether it be agreeable to the word of God; it were sad, if we should take that for the speaking of angels, which is the very voice of devils. Now though evil spirits can transform themselves into angels of light, yet they may be discerned, if we will try their work by the word: The good angels are distinguished from the bad, either by their apparitions, or by their actions; the former

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mer I omit, for the latter the poet gives them in thus;

*Whoſo will fiſt their actions, he ſhall find
By their ſucceſs if well or ill inclin'd,
The one from other; for the bleſſed ſtill
Square all their actions to the Almighty's will,
And to man's profit:—*

*The Cacodemon's labour all they can
Againſt God's honour, and the good of man.*

Indeed this is the ſure and indubitable character; the good angels never ſpeak any thing contrary to the word of God, or which is all one, the good angels are employed in nothing ſave the honour of God, and the profit and preſervation of good men; but evil ſpirits aim all their enterprizes and endeavours to derogate from God's worſhip, and to aſſume it to themſelves, and by their flattering deceptions, and oily inſinuations with man, to work the utter ſubverſion both of body and ſoul. It is good therefore to try their works upon our fancies, and if we find it agreeable to God's word, or if it aim at God's honour and man's profit, we may conclude, This was the ſpeaking of an angel of God.

But methinks I hear ſome object, You tell us of a work of angels upon our fancies day and night; and indeed in the night we can more eaſily obſerve ſome ſuch like impreſſions or work upon us in our dreams: But are not theſe things ſpoken againſt? Was not this the way of falſe prophets to obſerve their dreams, and by them to delude the people, ſaying, *I have dreamed, I have dreamed*, Jer. xxiii. 25.

I answer, Such dreams as tend to the leading men from the holy word of God to wicked doctrines or opinions, which are painted over with the pretence or colour of revelations and divine viſions, when they are indeed the mere deluſions of Satan, transforming himſelf into an angel of light, are not to be heeded, but rejected; and ſuch were the dreams of the falſe prophets tending to idolatry, againſt whom God ſpoke, 'If there ariſe among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a ſign or a wonder, and the ſign or wonder come to paſs, whereof he
' ſpoke

spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken to the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,' Deut. xiii.

1, 2, 3.

Yet this hinders not, but such dreams as come into us by God's special, and sometimes extraordinary work of providence, which must needs be directed unto some weighty and good end: As we must conclude, if we either consider the first mover, who is God, or the instruments, who are his holy angels, such dreams will challenge our very serious consideration, and diligent care to take notice of what they offer unto us, and the neglect or contempt thereof cannot be committed without great impiety; and therefore we have not only a warrant but an unavoidable and inviolable obligation in point of duty, to take notice of such dreams, and to make use of them according to their importance and purpose. 'In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions,' Job xxxiii.

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But because dreams are of several sorts, some proceeding only from the constitution of the heavens, or from the disposition of the air, or from previous cogitations, or from the temper of the body, or from the affection of the mind, or from the procuration of the devil, and only some few from the operation of good angels: It is therefore worthy of our pains to know some such marks or characters, whereby we may distinguish these last from all others of the former dreams.

A learned writer in his book of the *Baptized Turk*, hath laid down these marks of those dreams procured by angels.

1. When they move unto that which is truly and eminently good, or from the contrary evil, and have nothing in them that stands opposite to the truth and holiness of the word of God, or sound reason, or that addeth any thing

thing to God's word, as a new way of righteousness or salvation.

2. When they are of a wise, sober, just, and orderly frame and composure, without any tincture of lightness, glingling or vanity in them.

3. When they come unto us being in an holy temper and disposition of spirit.

4. When they leave both an holy and humble, and also a strong and certain impression upon the mind, moving not upon carnal, but spiritual principles and motives; to which we may add, an holy clearness and consolation in the spirit, an increase of vigour and readiness to godly obedience and holiness.

5. When they agree with some work that God hath in hand, and have something in them that seem to be above human inventions, and have an excellent agreement in the several parts thereof, presenting the same, or several things.

6. When they come unsought and unexpected; for if any man doth purposely seek divination by dreams, composing himself thereunto by superstitious rites and ceremonies, this were expressly against the word: For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, let not your prophets and diviners that be in the midst of you deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye caused to be dreamed.—But enough of this matter.

2. The angels persuade us to that which is good, they do not only declare to us what is God's will, but they advise us to it. This is the ordinary office of blessed angels, to instil good motions, to suggest good thoughts, to admonish and persuade us on all occasions to that which is good. As Satan is ever compassing the earth, seeking whom he may devour, here and there laying his snares to catch poor souls in, tempting and enticing them to all sorts of sin, as he spies occasion and opportunity for it, so are the good angels ever and anon suggesting good and pious thoughts; they tacitly admonish our minds, and provoke us to good duties of holiness and obedience. This makes some affirm, That whatsoever the evil angels can do in evil, the elect angels can do in good. If the devils

devils can suggest sin, surely the angels of God are stronger and wiser than devils.

Quest. *But how do the good angels suggest good?*

Ans^r. I answer, 1. They inspire, inject, or cast into our minds some holy motions. Seldom passes the day over our heads, but we may feel these injections; Come, this is the way, walk in it, strive to enter in at the strait gate, &c.

2. They provoke and stir us up with much importunity to this or that duty; *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c.* They know well enough our sluggish, dull and heavy disposition, our spiritual laziness, and therefore they add stirring, quickning, and soul-enlivening expressions or exclamations, *Ho, come ye to the waters; yea, they double it, or treble it, Come ye to the waters; and come ye, buy and eat: and come ye, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* They are not willing to give over till they have made us willing to yield to their motions for our own salvation.

You may object, Surely this is the genuine work of the Holy Ghost, thus to inspire and provoke us to good. Very true, and yet that hinders not but that the good angels may be instruments or agents. We say the Holy Ghost is the prime Spirit, and yet the angels are as ministering spirits; the Holy Ghost is the fountain, or head of water, but the angels are as cisterns and channels of water; it is the will of the Holy Ghost to employ the angels, and to communicate himself to us by the ministry of angels, and therefore the Holy Ghost and angels need not clash. Indeed motions, inspirations, and holy suggestions are ever originally and primarily from the Spirit of Christ; and hence it is, that commonly we put them all on that score, we give them all to Christ's Spirit; yet I cannot forget the author's opinion I cited before, That God's works in the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate; and that good angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body. Another speaks as confidently every whit; for my part, (with the good leave of my learned and religious brethren) I doubt not but good angels suggest go

tender holy motions, offer pious thoughts, yea, refresh the often parched spirits of gracious men with inward joy. Shall the devil work in the children of disobedience? Eph. ii. 2. enormously disquiet the affections, 1 Sam. xvi. 15. Yea, inject wicked thoughts into godly men with success. 1 Chron. xxi. 2. And shall the good angels be excluded from all actings and operations upon the inward senses of man? I can never believe it.

3. The angels repel temptations, or prevent occasions of sin. This was the meaning of Michael's contending with the devil about the body of Moses: It was the devil's design to discover Moses' grave, and the archangel was ready to resist him. But why would the angel resist him? To what end was the dispute about the body of Moses? Why might not the body and burial place of Moses have been discovered to all? Surely the angel would not have it known, lest the people should have idolized and worshipped it in after-times. The devil loves idolatry, and of all kinds of idolatry, the devil abuseth the world most with the idolatrous respects to the bodies and reliques of dead saints. Now the archangel knew his design, and therefore he would by no means have those burial places known. Thus Ainsworth paraphraseth on that text of Deuteronomy, *He was buried in a valley of Moab over against Beth-Peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day*, Deut. xxxiv. The angel would have no occasion of superstition or idolatry thereby. Oh what blessed helps have we for preventing of sin? How busy are the angels in our behalf (when we little think of it) to repel temptations, and to prevent occasions of evil? as our good endeavours are often hindred by Satan, *I would have come to you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindred us*, 1 Thes. ii. 16. So are our evil actions hindred by the heavenly angels, else were not our protection equal to our danger. A good angel opposed Balaam in an evil way; and if an heavenly spirit obstruct the course of the evil, and stand in the way of a forcerer's sin, how much more ready are those spiritual powers to stop the spiritual miscarriages of God's dearest children?

4. The angels quicken our dulness, encourage our weakened

weakness, and comfort us in our sorrow. All these we may read together in one chapter; *I was in a deep sleep* (saith Daniel, chap. x. 10, 11, 12) 'on my face, and my face towards the ground, and behold an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees, and upon the palms of my hands; and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent; and when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling, then said he unto me, Fear not.—And there came again and touched me, one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong; yea be strong; and when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak, for thou hast strengthened me,' ver. 18, 19. In like manner we find an angel quickning, encouraging and strengthening Elijah in his work, 2 Kings i. 3, 15. and Isaiah to his work, Isa. vi. 6, 7. and Paul to his work, Acts xxvii. 23, 24. But especially in the sufferings of his saints, how usual was it with God to send down his angels for their comforters? When Christ was in his agony, *there appeared an angel to him from heaven strengthening him*, Luke xxii. 43. When Peter was in prison. *Behold the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison*, Acts xii. 7. When Paul was in his dangerous voyage, *There stood by him in the night the angel of God, whose he was, and whom he served, saying, fear not, Paul*, Acts xxvii. 23. In the succeeding times of the church, how frequently did the angels appear to blessed martyrs for their comfort and encouragement? Thus Theodorus saw and felt the ravishing hand of an angel: Thus Theophila, Agnes, Lucia, Cecilia, and others, saw the good angels as their comforters, and protectors of their chastity. And altho' they do not now appear to us in bodily shapes, as in those times, yet the same offices are performed by them in their spiritual and mysterious ways; now they quicken our dulness, encourage our weakness, and comfort us in heaviness.

Whether the Angels contribute any thing to our Conversion.

BEFORE I pass this, I would propound a question or two: As,

1. Whether the angels contribute any thing to our conversion? We have heard at large, that devils do what they can to hinder our conversion: And are the angels less active to good than they are to evil, I cannot think it? We may be sure, that as the bad angels do bad offices, so the good angels are in their way prompt and ready to do all the good offices they can as to our good; and my reason is, their will is conformed to the will of God, *They do his commandments, they hearken to the voice of his word.* Psal. ciii. 20. Whatsoever God wills they will: Now God wills the conversion of sinners; *As I live, I desire not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live,* Ezek. xxxii. 11. and therefore they will it, and as they will it, so they reduce that will into several acts or else it were in vain. But what those acts are, may be another question.

S E C T. V.

Wherein do the Angels contribute, as to our Conversion?

THE several acts of angels, as to our conversion, are such as these.

1. They inform our judgments: We have heard before how they invisibly teach us, instruct us, enlighten us, and herein do they contribute to our conversion: For what is the first work of conversion, but illumination? as in the first creation, the first-born of God's works was light, *God said, let there be light, and there was light,* Gen. i. 3. So in new creation the first work is light; *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,* 2 Cor. iv. 6. Hence the state of nature is called darkness, and the state of grace is called light; Eph. v. 8. *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. And, He hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light,* 1 Pet. ii. 9. Now if in this work the angels are assistant, they must needs contribute

tribute to our conversion in the first work of it; which is illumination.

2. They move our will: This is what we said before, that the good angels persuade us to that which is good; they instil good motions, they suggest good thoughts, they provoke us to duties of holiness and obedience, and especially to this main work of conversion and regeneration; well they know, that without this all is nothing; *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God,* John iii. 3. And their desires are strong, that the places made void in heaven by the fallen angels, should be supplied by men and women, and therefore they do what they can to move and persuade us to a change, and make use of arguments to do this or that; but the holy Spirit makes effectual, and gives the issue to what they move. If you say, what needs this ministration, for Christ can move and persuade without them? I may, as well ask, what need ministers, preaching, sacraments? It is enough to silence and stop our mouths, when we hear these are God's ways of administration, these are God's ordinances, of which the angels are a great part, and according to the good pleasure of God, they act, and stir, and move, and persuade us to conversion.

3. They work on our affections, endeavouring to settle them, and keep them on right objects. It is true, they cannot turn the stream and current of our affections back, (God only can turn this Jordan back) but they can drive them faster, and cause them to swell above their natural channels. It is the spirit of bondage which worketh fear, but when fear is wrought, they can blow it up, and intend it more, as the spirit's instruments. Sometimes you have heard how evil angels could work further and deeper fears than the Holy Ghost by himself intended; and cannot the good angels do regularly, what the evil angels can do irregularly? If the evil angels cannot only propound such objects as shall move us to fear, but also can stir up such humour in the body, which such a passion doth act and stir in, *Ex. gr.* If they can effectually work upon melancholly, so as to put a man into a timorous and trembling disposition; how much more can the good angels pro-

pound objects, and stir up humours, and so work on the affections, whether of fear, or hope, or sorrow, or joy.

4. They repel temptations. You have heard abundantly how the soul is haunted with several temptations, when the work of conversion is passing upon it, then is Satan busy by way of revenge, for the souls revolt from him. But are not the good angels as busy as Satan? and if they resist him, what can all the troops of hell hurt us? We know the good angels have as much advantage of their strength over Satan, as they have of their station. How then should that evil one stand in the encounter? or what need we fear in such mighty and strong hands? He that passes with a strong convoy thro' a wild and perillous desert, scorns the danger of wild beasts or robbers, no less than if he were in a strong tower at home: So may we the onsets of the powers of darkness, whilst we are guarded by the angels, who both defend us, and resist Satan in all his fiery darts.

5. They joy in the conversion of sinners, so that heaven rings with the joy: 'Likewise I say unto you (saith Christ) there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth,' Luke xv. 10. What manner of joy, this is unknown to us, and so shall be until that time, that time shall be no more; only this we believe for the present, that the conversion of sinners is the jubilation of angels; and this, I take it, is the plain sense or meaning of Christ's words, that when they see the ranks and files of lapsed angels filled up with new recruits, men and women, penitent for their sins, this is matter of joy, of extatical joy to the holy angels of God.

S E C T. VI.

Experiences of this Truth, as to our outward Man.

FOR some experiences of this blessed truth, in respect of our bodies.

1. They keep us from evil.

One going seasonably to bed, about midnight he awoke, and could not sleep; thereupon he awaked his wife, and talking with her, suddenly he espied a light in his chamber, which came thro' a box-hole; he demanding of her what that light was, she opened her eyes, but could not tell.

tell: Anon she arose out of bed, and looking thro' the ~~lax~~ hole, (which by a gracious providence was that night open, tho' usually shut) she espied a fire kindled on some wood in the house, which quickly would have set all on a flame, that no way they could have escaped with life, but they both hastened out of their chamber, and coming into the house, they timeously quenched the fire, and admiring at God's providence in each circumstance, they returned in safety to bed, and found that rest and sleep after, which before they could not obtain.

The same person riding over a deep water, his horse in the midst of the stream laid him down under him. Thus both man and horse plunged in, the man with much ado having recovered himself, and getting thro', he rode home wet and cold, which cast him into a fever, yet in time he recovered, and blessed that God, who by the ministry of his angels delivered him from the danger both of fire and water.

The same person being at home, a daughter came to visit him, who one evening was very importunate to go more early than ordinarily they used to bed; importunity so far prevailed, that presently they went to prayers, and commending themselves to God for his custody, all in the family made up the stairs to several lodgings; no sooner were they dropped asleep, but presently a noise like thunder, awaked them all, he wondred and asked his wife if she heard the thunder; who answered that she being last in bed, was scarcely asleep, but could not tell whether it was a clap of thunder, or a fall of some part of the house; and rising out of bed to go to the chamber where their daughter and servant-maid lay in two beds, at the entrance into the chamber, the daughter cried, Stay mother, or you endanger your life, for I believe the chamber-floor, and chamber adjoining is fallen down. By that caution she tremblingly stayed her foot, and drew back to tell her husband the news; he desired her to go down stairs into the house, light a candle and see the matters; but endeavouring to open the door below into the house, the passage was stopped with the floor of the chambers fallen down: Their daughter that lay in one of the two chambers,

bers, seated over the house, cried, that her bed crack'd, and that she was afraid to ly in it; thereupon they advised her to hasten out of it, and with the maid to creep into a corner of the chamber, which was most secure. In the mean time, a cry or call was made through a casement for some neighbours help; by this means a candle was brought, but no passage being possible thro' the doors, the stanchion of a casement was cut, and one came in at the window with his light, then it was seen how two chambers in the house were suddenly fallen, with all the weight of wood, and clay, and furniture above, and that nothing remained un-fallen, but a little room of one chamber, where the two beds stood wherein the two women lay. At first view they all stood amazed, but recollecting themselves, the two women were by a ladder safely brought down from the corner of the fallen chamber, and being brought into another chamber, they took their rest till the morning. At day light they saw their wonderful preservations, and viewing the circumstances, it appeared: 1. If that night all had not gone to bed before their ordinary time, they had been all sitting in the house, which then would have fallen upon them, and have slain them all. 2. If his wife had not then stayed her step, when the daughter cried, Stay mother, she had fallen down into the nether room amongst the rubbish, and probably had lost her life. 3. If those two beds had not stood whereon the two women lay, when all besides fell with one crush, they had both perished, especially the daughter with a child in her belly, being yet but an embryo. In every circumstance appeared the finger of God, and the promise was minded, *He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways, they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone*

Simon Grinæus, a learned and holy man, coming from Heidelberg to Spire, was desirous to hear a certain preacher in that city, who in his sermon did then let fall some erroneous propositions of popish doctrine, wherewith Grinæus not being a little offended, craved speedy conference with the preacher, and laying before him the falshood and danger of his doctrines, exhorted him to an a-
bandoning

bandoning and retraction of those false opinions; the preacher gave good words and fair semblances to Grinæus, desiring farther and more particular conference with him, each imparted to other their names and lodgings; yet inwardly, as being stung with that just reproof, he resolved a revenge, by procuring the imprisonment, and (if he might) the death of so sharp a censurer. Grinæus misdoubting nothing, upon his return to his lodging reports the passages of his late conference to those who sat at the table with him, amongst whom Melancthon being one, he was called out of the room to speak with a stranger, newly come into the house; going forth accordingly, he finds a grave old man, of a goodly countenance, seemly and richly attired, who in a friendly and grave manner tells him, that within one hour there would come to their inn certain officers as from the king of the Romans to attack Grinæus, and to carry him to prison, willing him to charge Grinæus, with all possible speed to flee out of Spires, and requiring Melancthon to see that this advantage were not neglected; which said, the old man vanished out of his sight: Instantly Melancthon returning to his companions, recounted unto them the words of this strange monitor, and hastened the departure of Grinæus accordingly, who had no sooner boated himself on the Rhine, than he was eagerly sought for at his said lodging. Of this Melancthon, in his commentary on Daniel writes, and acknowledges God's fatherly providence in sending this angel of his for the rescue of his faithful servant.

John Spangenberg, pastor of Northense, was no sooner slept out of his house, with his family to go to the Bains, but the house fell right down in the place.—Our own experience at home is able to furnish us with divers such instances; if a man by some strong instinct be warned to change that lodging which he constantly held for some years, and finds his wonted sleeping place that might be crushed with the unexpected fall of an unsuspected contiguation, to what cause can we attribute this but to our attending angels?—Or have we been preserved from mortal dangers which we could not tell how by our providence to have evaded? our invisible guardians have done it. *Bishop Hall.*

In the true portraiture of his sacred majesty Charles the second, it appears, that by God this king reigns, in that he hath exercised those providences over him, that are hardly exercised over ten thousand of us. That star in the east (which was discovered over St. James's at mid-day, seeming from heaven to gratulate the royal birth, displayed its modest beams in spite of sun shine, in the middle of the air) speaks much this way: The powers in heaven that so watchfully guarded him thro' those sad days, wherein thousands fell at his right hand, and ten thousands at his left, aim'd at some great prize; his royal life, the care of angels, must not go out privately, and be lost unprofitably in a corner. Oh how the angels forbade those millions of profane hands, that would rudely have touched the Lord's anointed! his escape at Worcester was almost miraculous: He sought his way all along five miles from Worcester, then he turned to the less frequent d ways that could be, until he came to the borders of Staffordshire, then he removed to an adjoining wood, where he, and only one with him, walked securely a while, until they found an oak for his majesty, in the hollow of which he lodged himself for three days and three nights, until my lord Wilmot providing for his majesty a safe lodging, and then seeking him in the wood, with much ado found his sacred person guarded, and as I may say, fed by angels.

Let this story never be forgotten. EIKON BASILIKE.
By F. R.

2. They keep us in, or restore us to health.

One going to London inned and lodged all night at the Maiden head in Cat-eaten Street, where the same night died a young wife of the pestilence; as another had died before, the sickness and death of the parties being concealed, he arose in the morning, took some repast, and went about his occasions, but at his return in the afternoon, as he was going into the inn, a friend called him back, and told him the truth; in the midst of the discourse, he saw the gates shut before his eyes, and presently was written upon them, *Lord have mercy on us.* This hath minded him of God's providence and promise, *Surely he shall deliver*

deliver thee from the noisome pestilence, for he shall give his angels charge over thee.

John Trelille, a poor cripple in Corawal, that for sixteen years together was fain to walk upon his hands by reason of the close contraction of the sinews of his legs, (upon three motions in his dream to wash in a well called Madernes) was suddenly so restored to his limbs, that I saw him, saith my author, able both to walk and get his own maintenance.——Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, in his dream received the prescript of a remedy of his disease, which the physicians could not cure. Whence came this, but by the suggestion of angels? Have we been raised up from deadly sicknesses, when all natural helps have given us up, God's angels have been our secret physicians, *Bishop Hall*.

3. They furnish us with all necessities of this life.

Mr. Samuel, a godly minister in queen Mary's days was conveyed before bishop Bonner, who committed him to prison, and there chained him up to a post, in such sort, that standing on tip-toes he was fain to bear up all the weight of his body in that manner, to his intolerable pain; besides, he allowed him but three morsels of bread, and three spoonfuls of water a day, so that he was extremely tormented with hunger and thirst, and had his body so miserably dried up, that he would fain have drunk his own water, but could not make one drop. But after he had continued in this miserable case three days he fell asleep, and one clad all in white seemed to stand before him, telling him, that from henceforth he should neither hunger nor thirst any more; which also came to pass, though he was not burnt till many days after. *Whyte's Power of godliness*.

A doctor of divinity, of singular learning and piety, sent his maid to the market to get provision for the following week. But all the money he and his wife could make was but five shillings; his wife fell a weeping, and told her husband, that there was little likelihood that they could live together, and that therefore she would take one or two of her children with her, and live among her friends, if he could provide for himself and the rest of the children: Nay, dear wife, said he, we have lived thus long together,

together, let not us now part, let us rely on God's providence. She in her grief and haste answered, Well, send providence to market, and see what it will bring home. It was so that day, that a nobleman who knew this doctor very well, dining with divers gentlemen at an inn, looking out of a window, saw the doctor's maid, whom being an ancient servant, he knew, and sent for her up, asking her how her master did; she answered, Very well, and fell a weeping; he enquiring the cause, she told him what straits they were brought to; he wondring, and being troubled at it, called the inn-keeper, and wished him to give that maid ten pounds, and every one of the gentlemen gave twenty shillings a-piece. So the doctor sending providence (of which the angels are servants and instruments) to market, it brought him home fifteen pounds. Doubtless it is because we do not trust, not because God either cannot, or will not give, that makes us so often want mercies; and such providences would be usual, if our confidence in God were but so. *Idem ibidem.*

There was a certain poor family, who being in great want, and having little or nothing for the children in it, when dinner time came they put them off with play-things, and told them they would see if they could get them something for supper: And when supper time came, they would give them some small piece of bread, and so get them to bed; and thus they used them so long, while at last the children would not go to bed, but cried for bread. That night it was so, the lord Faulkland waking before midnight, could not sleep, and then it came into his mind that this family was in great want, insomuch that he called up some of his servants, and sent them with a great loaf and a cheese to the house; when they came, they found the children crying for bread, and the parents weeping by them, who with a great deal of joy and eagerness received that unexpected provision. Thus the Lord ordered it by his providence, that they were not only then relieved, but their necessities being related to the lord Faulkland, he took care of them for the future. *Idem ibidem.*

Luther hath this story: A certain woman, in the time

of famine, having nothing at all for herself and children to eat, being brought into very great extremity, she resolved upon this course; she made herself and all her children ready, and with a great deal of comfort and confidence she walked to a spring not far from her house: As she was going, one met her, who asked her, whither was she going with her children? She told him that all her provision was quite spent, and she was going with her children to such a fountain close by, being confident that God that had provided drink for her and her children, would there provide food for them also; and he that heard the young ravens, and provided for them, would much more take care of her and her little ones. He that met her wished her to return home, for she should meet with provision that was ready for her there; she returned and found a considerable quantity of meal, which was food for her and her children, but whence this provision came, she knew not, nor knew the man who told her of it.

S E C T. VII.

Experiences of this Truth as to our inward Man.

FOR some experiences of this blessed truth, in respect of our souls.

I. They declare 'to us God's will: Of old they did so to Abraham, Lot, Moses, Jacob, Manoah, Gideon, David, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zachary; and in the New Testament they did so to Joseph, Mary, Zechariah, the shepherds, Mary Magdalene, Peter, Philip, Cornelius, Paul, John the evangelist, and to all the apostles. At this time they do not so visibly declare God's will, nor must we trust to visions or revelations; yet many times they teach us by dreams, and many times they coin impressions on our fancy and imagination while we are waking: They can make rare and wonderful compositions of what they find in us; so that to me, here is the difference between the converse of men and angels; men can speak to the understanding by the mediation of our external senses, but the angels go a nearer way to work, and speak first of all to the internal senses, making such compositions there as the understanding presently takes off, and reads what is written. Do we not, waking
and

and sleeping, see impressions in our fancy, of things that we thought we had forgotten? this is done by the angels. *Dingley.*

One being a long while trained up in ceremonies, notions, fables, unprofitable matter, rather than sound and saving knowledge, which is in faith: At last conversing with some godly men, and with practical books, he found some impressions in his fancy of another kind of divinity, and so inclined, that divinity was rather practical than speculative; and that such kind of preaching as was usually delivered in an affected spruceness of language, and vain-glorious trimness of the windy and dead letter, would never save souls. These impressions were more and more fixed in him, and at last he was satisfied, that many poor illiterate souls, that felt the power of godliness on their own hearts, had more true knowledge of divinity than many learned doctors and rabbies, that had nothing but orthodoxy, or a swimming knowledge of truth: And that many unlearned snatched heaven, and took it by violence, whilst many learned with their learning perished, and went down to hell. The efficacy of this light he gives to the Spirit, but the instrumentality of it, as working upon the fancy or imagination, he ascribes to the angels.

A godly woman falling into great desertions, at last the Lord in secret prayer came in with abundance of light and comfort; but within a month after, she began to receive the Lord's supper, all her former fears and troubles turned upon her, insomuch as a little before the bread was administered to her, tho' she could not say that the devil appeared to her in a bodily shape, yet he seemed to her as if he did, and told her, that she should not eat; but then the Lord was pleased to bring into her mind that passage of Canticles, *Eat, O my friends*: Notwithstanding, Satan still continued terrifying of her, and when she had eaten, told her she should not drink; but the Lord brought the second clause of the verse into her mind, *Drink, yea, drink abundantly my beloved*; and so she drank also, and presently was filled with such unspeakable joys, that she knew not how she got home; which soul-ravishing joys continued for a fortnight after, and filled her mouth with songs.

songs of praise, so that she could neither sleep nor eat more than she forced herself to do out of conscience of duty.
Whyte.

2. They advise us to that which is good.

The light presented to one as before, many blessed motions came in to begin with the beginning of saving practical truths; and this he understood was the doctrine of regeneration; and therefore if ever he would be happy, he must have some feeling of that. Many objections were raised, That the wind bloweth where it listeth; and we are not sufficient of ourselves to think; and it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, &c. The objections are not formally now remembered. But notwithstanding them, the motions to fall on the work continued fresh, and finding them mightily upon his spirit, at last he submitted willingly to those inspirations, and every day set some time apart to be in the duty; it proved tedious and difficult at first, but afterwards sin appeared very sinful, and the Spirit set it home on the soul, and by degrees successively, he was led from a sense of misery, to some hope of mercy in Christ; and before he had done (though many a day it continued) the holy Spirit infused faith, whereby he closed with Jesus Christ as Saviour, and as Lord, and King, and Husband. This work begun by the angels, by instilling good motions, was the joy of angels when it was perfected. *There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, Luke xv. 7.*

One, about the time of reformation of religion, desired much of God the guidance and assistance of an angel; and from the thirty seventh year of his age he had sensible manifestations of a spirit that assisted him, and followed him till his death. In his dreams or visions he was sometimes admonished of this or that vice, and sometimes advertised of this or that danger, and sometimes resolved of this or that doubt, or sometimes persuaded to this or that duty. Once I heard a voice from heaven, saying, I will save thy soul. Usually in the morning, about the fourth hour, the angel would beat at his door to have awaked him, and if he had done any good or evil, he would have manifested the

the approval or disapproval of it by some sign: If in company he had spoken any unwary words, he was sure to be advertised and reprov'd for it by a dream in the night following. If he had read any book that was not good, the angel would have struck upon the book, to have caus'd him to leave it, and lay it aside: Often would the angel have provok'd him to prayer, and alms deeds, and other duties. Bodinus asking him, whether ever he had seen the form of this angel? he answered, that he never saw any thing, but only a bright and shining light, in a round orb; and once after prayer upon his bed, that he saw a sweet boy in white apparel, of admirable beauty.

Bodinus de Magnorum demonomania.

3. They repel temptations, or prevent occasions of sin.

One having many temptations offer'd him, especially in his dreams in the night, he observ'd, that at the same times such thoughts have come in, that in these very dreams he confidently cried out, Avoid Satan; and again, Avoid Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve; which beliefs were put in by the angels.

One Natalius, that had formerly suffer'd great persecution for the cause of Christ, was seduced by Asclepiodotus and Theodorus, two sectaries, to the bishop of their sect, promising to pay him an hundred and fifty crowns of silver every month, and so he join'd himself to them; but the Lord in mercy not intending to lose him that had suffer'd so much for his sake, admonish'd him by a vision to adjoin himself to the true church again, which the good man for the present, blinded with lucre and honour, did not regard as he ought to have done. The night after he was scourged by angels, whereupon in the morning, putting on sackcloth with much weeping and lamentation, he went to the Christian congregation, praying them for the tender mercies of Christ, that he might be received into their communion again, which request was accordingly granted unto him: *Clarke's general Martyrology.*

Cyprian relates a story of one of our fellow ministers, who in the midst of his torments began to faint, being greatly afraid of death, and desired to be released; at which

which time there appeared to him a young man of admirable beauty, and so bright, that man's mortal eye could scarce endure to behold him; who angrily said to him, *Pati timeris, exire non vultis, quid faciam vobis?* To suffer you dare not, to go out you will not, what shall I do with you? *Idem ibidem.*

4. They quicken, encourage and comfort us.

A certain godly woman riding behind her husband, who was a persecutor of Mr. Bolton, as they were riding, it thundred and lightened extraordinarily, so that he trembled exceedingly; his wife with a cheerful voice said, Husband, what ails you? why do you tremble thus? he answered, Do you not hear how terribly it thunders? she answered; Yes, I hear it: and said he; Do you not tremble also? she answered, No, she was not at all afraid, for she knew it was but the voice of her Father. He was amazed at her cheerfulness and answer, and began to think with himself, Surely these Puritans have something within them, that they are able to bear up in such storms, and that they have peace and are cheerful, while I tremble. And being not far off, immediately he did ride to Mr. Bolton, beseeching pardon that he had persecuted him, and desired that he would tell him what he should do to be saved.

Thomas Ward of Tiso in Warwickshire, was all his younger days very loose and dissolute, an enemy to godliness, and an hater of good men; but it pleased God at last to convert him, after a strange and wonderful manner, which was thus: In a morning, as he lay in his bed, plotting and contriving how to molest and persecute some of his godly neighbours, there appeared a vision to him of a city, wherein there were many poor ragged lambs in the streets, and a man driving of them, and he heard a voice saying to him, What are these? to which he answered, Sheep. Then said the voice again; These are my sheep whom thou persecutest. Presently after he saw another vision of a pile of faggots, and he heard a voice saying, What are these? he answered, Faggots. Then said the voice, As these are bound up for the fire, so thou deservest to be bound hand and foot, and cast into everlasting fire.

He answered, Truth, Lord: Yet withal he cried earnestly to the Lord for mercy. And presently after he saw in another vision a pillar of brass, but so bright and so glorious, that he was not able to look upon it: then said the voice, Be of good comfort, for thou art a chosen vessel, which shall suffer many things for my name's sake. To which he said, Lord, if it be thy will, let it be now; and presently he had a blow given him on his side, as with a dagger, the mark whereof he carried with him to his grave. After this, it pleased God to raise him up with comfort, and he became an eminent professor, and was very zealous for the truth. *Whyte.*

A little before the eighth persecution began, God by a vision revealed it to Cyprian, saying to him, Be quiet, and of good comfort, for peace will come, albeit a little stay there is for a while, for that some remain yet to be proved and tried. *Clark.*

Theodorus, for singing a psalm at the removing of the body of Babilas, being apprehended, was examined with exquisite torments, and so cruelly excruciated from morning till almost noon, that hardly he escaped with life, and being afterwards asked by his friends, how he could endure such extreme torments, said, That at first he felt some pain, but afterwards there stood by him a young man, who as he was sweating with pain, wiped away his sweat, and oft-times so refreshed him with cold water, wherewith he was so delighted, that when he was let down from the engine, it grieved him more than before.

Whilst Augustine was yet a Manichee, his mother Monica had a dream, that she was standing upon a wooden rule, and being very sad, saw a glorious young man very joyful, and of a cheerful countenance coming unto her, and that he asked her the cause of her sadness: and when she had declared that it was by reason of sorrow that she had for her son, who was then in the way of destruction, he bid her be of good cheer, and wished her to mark and observe, and that she should see her son to be with her where she was, and so she saw her son standing with her upon the same rule. *August. Con. l. 3.*

S E C T. VIII.

Experiences of this Truth as to Conversion.

FOR some experiences of the angels contributing to our conversion. On a time, Augustine being in a great heaviness, and deep contrition of heart, cried out, Oh! what is this? what suffer I under the tyranny of sin? unlearned men take heaven by violence, and we, with all our learning, ly groveling in flesh and blood. After this he had a great conflict, for all his past pleasures represented themselves before his eyes, saying, What wilt thou depart from us? and shall we be no more with thee for ever? And then a marvellous tempest of weeping came upon him, so that he cast himself on the ground under a fig-tree, and gave a full scope to his eyes, which brought forth presently whole floods of tears, and then behold he heard a voice, as if it had been a boy or maid singing and saying, *Tolle et lege, tolle et lege*; Take up and read, take up and read: Wherefore repressing the force of his tears, interpreting that this voice came from heaven, and was spoken by angels, he took up the book of Paul's epistles which he had with him, with a purpose to read the first chapter that he should find, and opening it, his eyes fixed on these words, 'The night is spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light; let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,' Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14. And by this means he was converted. *August. l. 8. Confess. c. 12.*

A woman telling me of her great trouble and grief, and of the long continuance of the pangs of the new birth, she said, that she heard at last a voice, plainly and distinctly saying to her, as she was bewailing her sins, If thou'll forget, I'll forget, if thou'll forget, I'll forget.

A man labouring in the pangs of the new birth, began to despair of his salvation, and at last concluded he should be damned, whereupon plotting and contriving what was best to do, he resolved to make away himself, and not to live any longer for these reasons: 1. Because he conceived,

the longer he lived, the more and greater would be his sin, And. 2. The more would God by his sin be dishonoured. And. 3. The more and greater would his torment, proportionably to his sin, be in the fire of hell. And even now going to the place where he had appointed the execution and self-murder, there suddenly came into his mind (as if a dart of light had been injected) this very word, Who knows? on which pondering and ruminating, he asked himself, Who knows what? and presently was thrown in (as he conceived) the end of the sentence, Who knows what is God's decree, or mind concerning me? Neither angels, devils nor men. On which words pausing and considering a while, he reasoned thus with himself, If I know not God's mind, it may be I shall be saved. Upon this he staid his purpose put on by Satan, and probably prevented by an angel, and so went to prayer, and within three days after he received comfort.

S E C T. IX.

Of the Duties that concern us in this Respect.

1. **I**N all dangers let us stir up faith, and exercise it on the promises of angel protection: Art thou a soldier? Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with thy wages; march, charge, retreat, do duty according to command: God shall cover thy head in the day of battle, for thou art in thy ways. But if thou invade the ministerial office, presuming to preach, who never was sent, look to thyself, thou canst not without usurpation pretend to God's keeping, for thou art out of all thy ways. Nor do I fear the frowns of any if offended heret, and reproving me for giving this just reproof: I am sure I am in my calling, in my ways, and therefore with comfort and confidence may rely on God, and his angels protection, only that we abuse not the promise as the devil did; let us keep in our ways, that we may be kept safe by the angels, then only is angel-protection to be expected, when we are in the ways God hath appointed; that is to say, within the compass of our general and particular calling; They shall keep thee in all thy ways, or in all thy bonds, or in all courses appointed thee by God. Surely we have need to look to ourselves in all our actions, as in eating,

eating, drinking, riding, sporting, for even in these God hath set us our ways. We hear of many sad disasters of God's dearest servants, and we need not wonder, if we but consider their wandrings. Alas, they keep not within compass, they are out of their ways, or otherwise they might walk safely without any danger. If Jacob keep but in his ways, he may safely meet with his brother Esau coming against him with four hundred men. Mr. Dod would say, He cared not where he was, if he could but answer these two questions well: Who am I and what do I here? Am I child of God, and am I in my ways? If we were careful of these things, we might free ourselves from all other cares: Oh let us look to our ways!

2. In our sicknesses, sores, dangers or plagues or pestilence, let us eye the promise of angel-ministration: 'Surely he shall deliver thee from the noisom pestilence.—— Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flyeth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day; a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right-hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.—— There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels charge over thee,' Psal. cxi. 3, 5, 6, 7, 10. Many other promises we have, both to prevent and qualify, and to prevent sicknesses, as Exod. xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15. Ps. xli. 3. Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8, Isa. xl. 31. And well may we live by faith on such promises as these: But why should the promises of angel-ministration be of use? To what end are these promises if we may not rest or roll ourselves upon them as well as others? Should God say in our sicknesses, Send to such a physician, and make use of him, and you shall be cured, we should submit: And are not these heavenly physicians of more value? And have we not an express promise, that in their ministration we shall have health? Oh let us eye these promises!

3. In outward wants let us have some thoughts of angel-ministration, as to supplies. It is a wonder how all the creation is serviceable to man, the very plants and herbs administer to his food, the beasts of the field, and fowls

of the air, are for his sustenance; the sun and stars contribute to his being and preservation, if any piece of the creation should escape his ministry, one would think it should be the mighty and blessed angels; and yet behold an angel provides bread for Elijah, and water for Ishmael, and all other necessities for God's children, *the world is yours*, saith the apostle, 1 Cor. iii. 21. God would never have made this field (the world) were it not for the corn (the godly) growing in it; and as of this corn the angels are the reapers, so they have care of it for its nourishment and preservation. Art thou a saint, and in want? Surely it concerns thee to shake off idleness, to take the opportunity, and observe God's providence in all affairs, and amidst those several providences of his ordering, forget not the ministration of angels. For my part, if together with the word my own experiences may be any encouragement, I do verily think, that rather than that thou shouldst die for thirst, an angel will open thine eyes to see a fountain, out of which thou mayst fill thy bottle with water, and take and drink.

4. In learning the whole counsel, will and mind of God, let us turn over those leaves which speak of angels; these are the invisible attenders of the blessed Deity, and without some knowlege and apprehension of them, we shall never attain to conceive of their God and ours, as we ought to do; But in this knowlege let us mind especially their ministration to our inward man; herein are many depths, yet are they sweet, delightful, and most profitable truths. They come to our phantasms (the species of sounds, of shapes, or of whatsoever else, as they are kept and preserved by the inward senses) that they move them at pleasure, and put together such conceptions or apprehensions as are most accomodate and fitted for the knowlege of that truth, which they would suggest to our minds. Is not this worthy of our knowlege? shall the angels take pains to speak to us, and to acquaint us with the knowlege of saving truths, and shall not we willingly hearken to them? O let us listen to what they say, and that they may have matter to work upon, and to speak to us about; let us be ever ready and prompt to receive good images and impressions

sions of this into our fancy. It is said, that an angel cannot put into our fancies what never was there before, as they can never make a man born blind to dream of colours and their difference, but they can make many compositions and deductions of the images they find there, to the saying of what they will; and therefore let us hear all the good we can, and take heed of receiving ill impressions by our ears or eyes, or any other way. If any one tell us an ill story once, the devil will tell it us a thousand times; it is a great happiness to this purpose not to know ill. And on the other side, if we see or hear good objects, and that our memories (which are as treasures of all we see or hear) be stuffed and filled with many such good things, then may we comfortably hope that the angels will make use of all those images to converse with us, and tell us over and over what is the will and mind of God.

5. In the many motions, inspirations and holy suggestions to this or that good, let us stop a while, and seriously consider whence these come. Certainly if they are good, and tend to good, they come either from the Spirit of God, or from his holy and blessed angels. I confess the efficacious power on the heart belongs only to the Spirit of God; it is the Holy Ghost that over rules, and melts and new-molds us, that so persuades as to charm, and turn and captivate our souls; yet the angels are ordinances, means and helps of God's own appointment; they are ministring spirits, sent from God to counsel and persuade us to this and that duty; and whether the good motions instilled proceed from the holy Spirit, or from these ministring spirits, it is good for us to listen, and hearken to these movings, workings, hints, intimations. Methinks we should hearken to the advice of a friend, how much more to God and his angels? Oh how sad is it for any soul by sin to counterwork the actings of angels, and breathings of the Spirit! that the angels should knock at our hearts, and that the Spirit should put in the hand by the hole of the door, and yet that neither should be yielded unto, but both resisted; this must needs grieve the Holy Ghost, and grieve the holy angels that would persuade us, and seal us up unto the day of redemption.

6. In the occasions of evil, or temptations to this or that sin, observe we the stops and lets which are often made by the holy and blessed angels. We little think how busy the angels are for our good; the devil, we know, is like a roaring lion, and the day passeth not over our heads, wherein he offers not this or that temptation to insnare our souls: And are not the good angels at counter work? Do not they as often pull us back? or do not they at least very often hedge and block up our ways, by withstanding the occasions of many a sin? O then say as Jacob did, Surely the angels of the Lord were in the preventing of this temptation, and I knew it not. It were enough to strike us into a dread, to break forth into praises of God, if in the overcoming of any temptation, we had some thoughts of the protection and ministration of angels; surely should we say, the Lord and his angels have helped and relieved us, or Satan had prevailed, and we had been quite foiled.

7. In our deadness, fears, sorrows, afflictions, let us remember the words of Elisha to his servant, *Fear not, for they that be with us, are more than they that are against us*, 2 Kings vi. 16. Seldom did the angels appear to any, but this was their language, *Fear not*; As, Fear not, Daniel; and, Fear not, Zecharias; and, Fear not, Mary; and, Fear not, Shepherds; and, Fear not, Paul, Dan. x. 12. Luke i. 13, 30 and ii. 10. Acts xxvii. 24. It is one of the prime offices to 'strengthen the weak hands, to 'confirm the feeble knees, and to say to them that are of 'a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God 'will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, 'he will come and save you,' Isa. xxxv. 34. What David said to Abiathar, that may we imagine the angels say to us, 'Fear not, ye sons and daughters of the Almighty, we 'are your protectors, strengtheners, comforters; and with 'us, and by us, you shall be safe-guarded,' 1 Sam. xxii. 23. O the many quicknings, encouragings, comfortings, that the saints have by the ministration of angels! Next to my God, and my Saviour, faith bishop Hall, I shall ever place my greatest comfort and confidence in the angels of God, neither hath earth nor heaven any creature-comforters like unto these; there is none like them, or to be compared
to them.

8. At all times and seasons, let us think and carry, as in the presence of God, and sight of his angels. If I may instance in some times: As, 1. In time of temptation, let us think of it then. Seneca gave Lucilius this counsel, Whatever he was doing, that he should imagine some of the Roman worthies did behold him, and then he would do nothing dishonourable. Surely if the eye of God and of his angels were ever in our eye, this would be a super-seedeas and counter-poison against all sin: Tell me, how dare you sin in their presence, or do that in their view, which you would not dare to do in the sight and presence of some earthly man? *I charge you before God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels,* saith Paul 1 Tim. v. 21. *q. d.* Consider God's presence and Christ's presence; or if they work but little with you, consider the presence of the elect angels. Surely the nearer that things come to the manner of our presence, the more they will affect us; and therefore consider, that the angels are present with us in the very room where we are acting our very wickedness. I blush to think, said the author above cited, how often I have done that whereof the angels were ashamed for me, I abhor myself to recount their just dislikes, and do willingly profess how unworthy I am of such friends, if I be not hereafter jealous of their just offence. 2. In time of public service and public duty, think on it then, *For this cause,* saith the apostle, *ought the woman to have power over her head,* that is to say, to be modestly veiled, *because of the angels,* 1 Cor. xi. 10. Elect angels are exact and careful observers and eye-witnesses of our behaviour and deportment in the public ordinances. To this end were the curtains of the tabernacle pictured full of cherubims, to signify, that about our solemn meetings, whole troops of angels take notice of our carriage. Surely if this were considered, we should be very serious in God's worship: Yea, how spiritual and heavenly should we be, if our hearts were but fixed on those glorious angels? O ye blessed spirits, said a saint, ye are ever by me, ever with me, ever about me, but especially in God's house I do as good as see you, for I know you to be there, I reverence your glorious persons, I bless God for you, I walk awfully,

ly, because I am ever in your eyes; I walk confidently because I am ever in your hands. My brethren, we are even now at this time of public meeting amidst watchful and waking overseers; we are look'd and look'd thro' in all our ways as if heaven were all eyes round about us; Oh then with what fear and trembling, with what reverence and devotion should we stand, or wait here before God and his holy angels.

9. In reference both to others and ourselves, let us learn to imitate angels.

1. For others, let us imitate thus, they are as our guardians, physicians, purveyors, tutors, instructors, soldiers, quickners, encouragers, comforters; so let us in our several stations and places aspire to angelical work; if the angels guard us, let us be as guardians of one another; if they study our health, let us wish health, and endeavour it as we may one for another: If they purvey for us, let us relieve the necessity of the saints; if they tutor us, let us acquaint one another with the mysteries of grace; if they instruct us, and persuade us to our duties, let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and good works, *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day*: If they fight for us, and take part with us against evil angels, let us take part with the saints against the oppressions and violence of all wicked men; if they quicken, encourage and comfort us, let us quicken the slothful, confirm the weak, and comfort the feeble-minded. Surely the way to have angel's reward, or to see the face of God, is to do the work of angels. O let us improve this piece of the creation to our use, as well as all the rest.

2. For ourselves, let us imitate thus: 1. Reverence the majesty of God as they do, Isa. vi. 2. 2. Stand ready prest to execute the will of God, as they do; they are of a most holy nature, and therefore are they called holy angels, Mat. xxv. 31. Luke xx. 36. So be we holy, even as they are holy. It is but equal that we who expect to be like the angels in glory (*Ijangelai*) should be like them in grace: Many would strive to be like them for gifts and parts, but not for holiness, which yet is the special thing propounded to our imitation: When we say, *Thy will be done*

done in earth as it is in heaven, no question this principally is intended, that we should lead here angelical lives; that as in heaven they are ever doing God's will, there is no sin there, so we should keep harmony with the angels of heaven, and do his will there.

10. To conclude. In all our duties, as in reference to the angels, let us *look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith*, Heb. xii. 2. They are as the means and instruments of our good, but he is the author and finisher, and all the efficacy flows from him. Hence it is that we must chiefly apply ourselves to him, *Trust not in man, nor in princes*, saith the Psalmist, Psal. cxlvi. 3. So may I go on, *Trust not in princes, no nor in angels, nor archangels absolutely, but still in subordination to Jesus Christ*. This use the Psalmist teacheth us of angel-protection; *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him*, Psal. xxxiv. 7, 8. And what then? *O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him; not in them, but in him*. Our chief confidence must be in none that is on this side God. When God promised Moses that an angel should go before Israel, and yet withal threatened the subduction of his own presence, (*I will send an angel before thee, but I will not go up in the midst of thee*, Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3.) no marvel if Moses were no less troubled, than if they had been left destitute, and without a guard; and that he ceased not his importunity, till he had won the gracious engagement of the Almighty for his presence in the whole expedition: *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence*. For what is the greatest angel in heaven without his Master? O then let us eye God, and eye Jesus Christ in all, above all, and beyond all angel-ministration. It was a sweet saying of one we mentioned before, Blessed be God for the angels, as the author of them, and their protection; and blessed be the angels under God, as the means used by him for our protection, and other blessings. Let the angels have their due, but let God in Christ be our All in all: For as by him the angels were created, so were they created for him, *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist*. Col. i. 16, 17.

C H A P. IV. S E C T. I.

Of the Ministration of Angels at our Death.

THUS far have we observed the angels ministration, even until death; and yet they have not done, for no sooner death seizeth on the elect, but they minister to them, and in some respects continue their ministration till the resurrection day. In order to this, we shall first observe their ministration, and secondly, our duties.

1. For their ministration, that known place is most obvious, Luke xvi. 22. 'And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And we read of Michael the archangel contending with the devil about the body of Moses,' Jude 9. Whence some observe, That angels have a care, not only of the souls, but of the bodies; yea, even of the dead bodies of the saints. *Dr. Manton.*

S E C T. II.

Of the manner of Angel-ministration at that Time.

FOR the manner of their ministration, it relates both to bodies and souls.

1. For the bodies of the faithful.

1. In the very agony of death they help and ease them: Thus was Christ refreshed in the midst of his agony by an angel. In like manner are they serviceable to the saints; for if ordinary physicians have their electuaries, how much more can the angels minister cordials in their way?

2. After death they guard the bodies of the saints. The devil would have abused the dead body of Moses, but Michael the archangel contended with him, and rescued the body out of his hands. Satan's malice is without end, and therefore hath he stirred his instruments to abuse the dead bodies of martyrs; he loves not that dust wherein the holy Spirit dwelled; but the angels take care of every dust, so that not one shall be lost at the general day. Suppose them scattered up and down the world, yet are they but thrown and sown in the earth, that they may spring out again to a glorious incorruption; and in the mean time the angels are a guard, and have a regard to them in their sleep till the morning of the resurrection day.

2. For the souls of the faithful.

1. The

1. The angels, in the very article and point of death, are vigilant over them, and oftentimes inspire the parting souls with a spirit of divination or consolation, surpassing all human knowledge. Thus Gregory could say, That sometimes souls before their departure came to the knowledge of things by revelation, and sometimes by heavenly inspiration they penetrate with their spiritual eyes the very secrets of heaven itself. Do we not see by experience, that when the soul is drawing into a separate condition, it is in a great part delivered from bodily operations, and from the business of the outward senses, and from the commerce with external and worldly matters, which puts it as it were, into a kind of Sabbath, or state of rest? Now the more quiet the soul is, and the more sequestered from earthly and outward things, the more apt it is to enjoy the benefit of internal light, and the better fitted for spiritual commerce with God himself, or with angels, which (saith one) may also lead us to understand something towards a reason, why men drawing near their departure, are observed to be disposed to preface and prophecy, or to be full of comfort, as if heaven entered into them, before they entered into heaven. *Dr. Warmstry.*

2. The angels stand ready to receive souls separate from their bodies into their embraces. Macarius, a learned monk, could say, that immediately after death, the quires of angels received the souls of saints into their own side, into the pure world, and so brought them unto the Lord: Wicked men when they die, shall have a black guard of angels to receive them, and to hale them down to hell, but the godly shall have a white guard, the same angels that were said before *to bear them up in their hands*, will then receive them into their arms, and fall upon them with kisses and embraces.

3. The angels convey souls in their hands, or on their wings, thro' the air and middle region, up into heaven. We cannot go from earth to heaven, but we must needs pass thro' the devils territories, or thro' the air, for so is Satan called, *The prince of the power of the air*, Eph. ii. 2. that is to say, of the airy dominion or principedom; thither were the devils with Satan their prince exiled from heaven, whence

whence the Jews have a tradition, That all the space betwixt the earth and the firmament, is full of troops of evil spirits. And it is the opinion of all doctors, saith Hieron, that devils have their mansions and residence in that space between the heaven and the earth. And altho' some against this alledge those texts, 'For if God spared not the angels which sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into the chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment,' 2 Pet. ii. 4. 'And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day,' Jude 6. Yet learned Mede hath expounded the first text thus, That he cast them down to hell-ward, or to this lower orb, there to be reserved for chains of darkness at the day of judgment. And the latter text thus, That the evil spirits which fell into this lower region, were there reserved, as in a prison, for everlasting chains of darkness at the judgment day. This is the valley of the shadow of death, thro' which the souls of saints are to go to heaven; and because of the dangerous voyage, the angels scour and clear the passage for them; they go with them and fight for them, and with speed and triumph at last convey them to their Father's house. Oh with what pomp and triumph did Lazarus' soul ride on the wings of angels! never was Dives so honoured in his life as was Lazarus at his death; he might ride in some chariot drawn with horses, but Lazarus was, and the souls of all believers shall be drawn at their death in fiery chariots; they shall be carried and conveyed to heaven by the angels of God.

4. The angels welcome the souls of saints in this heavenly progress to their heavenly Canaan. They are not only porters to carry souls, but they are porters also to receive souls; they stand ready at heaven's gates to set open the doors, and to bid them enter into their master's joy. In that vision which John had of the great city, the holy Jerusalem, he saw *twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels*, Rev. xxi. Our English annotations say, that these angels are as porters to receive men into heaven. Howsoever Adam was kept out of paradise by the cherubims, yet cherubims

cherubims and seraphims, and all the host of heaven, are ready to receive the saints into this glorious city. Oh what a joy will be in heaven at the first admission of these souls! What clasping, closing, kissing, embracing, will be at this entrance betwixt saints and angels? Welcome, say the angels, and welcome, say archangels: Yea, the principalities triumph, and powers rejoice, and virtues shine, and thrones glitter, and cherubims give light, and seraphims burn in love at the soul's arrival. What congratulations are those amongst the angels, that now the worst of their service is past, that now the poor souls they had in charge are by their good help escaped, and freed from all the miseries of the world, and snares of the devil, and pains of hell, and are now entred *through the gates into the city*, Rev. xxii. 14. where they and their charge shall live together, and love together, and sing together Jehovah's praise? Never had the saints such welcome in this world, as at this day they have, or shall have by the angels of God into the kingdom of God.

5. The angels present the souls of saints before Christ in his throne, and there immediately they receive their sentence. This must needs follow, the angels cannot leave their charge, till they bring them to him who gave them the charge of them: Away therefore they flee to the Lamb in his throne, and covering their faces with their wings, there they present with chearfulness of spirit his redeemed ones, *q. d.* Glorious king of saints, hither we bring these souls which thou gavest us in charge to keep, their dusts are indeed returned to the earth as they were, but their spirits must needs return to God who gave them, Eccl. xii. 7. Come take them into thy bosom and glory; they are spirits, yea, spirits sublimated, (as being born again of water and of the Spirit) and therefore assimilated to thyself; they are pure sparks now freed and severed from their dust and ashes, and therefore they fly up, or they come up hither on our wings unto thee the great Spirit, the element of spirits; oh that they may find union and coalition with thee! oh that they may be with thee where thou art, and that they may for ever behold thy glory which thou hast given them! To whom answer is given

given as from the throne, Welcome dear souls into this glorious kingdom of mine, this is that inheritance I prepared for you before the foundation of the world. Why, you are they whom I created in my own image, after my own likeness; you are my off-spring created immediately by my hand, and in my image, as to your very substance. It is true, I made all the world, and something I made out of nothing, as the chaos was made, but my image other creatures did not bear; you only are spiritual substances, and vital lights; you only have those luminous substances, or substantial lights from the gift of your creation, which is a degree above the angels, for they have not any light genial and inherent to their essence, but are only mirrors of the uncreated light. And tho' a taint came upon you by reason of sin, so that this image wherein you were created was exceedingly marred, yet by a work of grace I renewed this image; and thereupon that original affinity to me, the God of spirits, is not only restored but endeared. And now this is my sentence, Well done good and faithful servants, you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things, enter you into the joy of your Lord.

6. The angels now begin to join in concert with the souls of saints, and to sing those hallelujahs that never shall have an end. And round about the throne were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind;—and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when these beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sits on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sits on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy sake they are and were created. And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne; and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of the angels was ten thousand times ten thousand; and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches,

riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb: And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and about the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen, blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God, for ever and ever, Amen, Rev. iv. 8, 9, 10, 11, and v. 11, 12. and vii. 10, 11, 12. Lo here all God's saints of the Old and New Testament called twenty four elders, comprehended under the twenty four patriarchs, and twelve apostles, and all the ministers of Christ called four beasts, or living wights comprehended under the four Evangelists; and all the angels of heaven, an innumerable company of angels, all joining in one concert, Heb. xii. 21. Oh what joys are here! What harmonies are these! What warbling of saints and angels! If Francis (as Bonaventure stories it) hearing but one angel play upon an harp, was so transported with the melody, that he thought himself in another world; how are the souls of saints transported, who no sooner arrive into glory, but they hear more than twelve legions of angels, accompanied with a numberless number of glorious saints, all singing at once, Hallelujah, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, praise, and honour, and glory, and power be unto God, and Christ, and the Spirit of Christ for ever and ever.

S E C T. III.

Of the Experiences of this Truth.

I shall add some experiences of this blessed truth.

1. They help us and ease us in the pangs of death.

Mr. Hawks being intreated of his friends, that in the midst of the flame, wherein he must die, he would shew them some token, if he could, that the fire was not so intolerable, but a man might therein keep his mind quiet and patient; this he assented to, and promised, that if the

rage of the pain were tolerable. he would lift up his hands above his head, before he gave up the ghost: At the stake he smiles, and patiently addressed himself to the fire, and after his fervent prayers made to God, fire was put to him, in it he continued long, and when his speech was taken away by the flame, his skin drawn altogether, and his fingers consumed with the fire, so that all men thought that he had been dead, he being mindful of his promise, suddenly lift up his hands burning of a light fire, and with great joy clapped them three times together, whereupon there was such shouting among the people, especially by those that knew the meaning of it, as the like hath scarce been heard; and so the blessed martyr, presently sinking down into the fire, gave up his spirit unto God. *Fox's Martyrology.*

Mr. James Benham being at stake to be burnt, in the midst of the flames, which had half consumed his arms, and his legs, he spake these words, O ye Papists, behold ye look for miracles, and here now ye may see a miracle, for in this fire I feel no more pain than if I were in a bed of down; yea, it is to me as a bed of roses. *Idem ibidem.*

There was in Mechlin one Andrew Thissen, who had three sons, whom he carefully brought up in the knowlege of the truth, two of them were condemned to the fire, and one of them feeling the violence of the flame, said, O what a small pain is this compared with the glory to come! and so committing their spirits into the hands of God, they finished their race.

Henry Voes and John Elsch being brought to the stake for the testimony to the Protestant religion, when the fire was kindled at their feet, one of them said, Methinks you do strow roses under my feet; and presently after they quietly slept in the Lord.

William Cowper being ready to die, said, Now my soul shall be glad, for at all parts of this prison the Lord hath set to his pioneers to loose thee; head, feet, milt and liver are fast failing; yea, the middle strength of the whole body, the stomach is weakned long ago, arise, make ready, shake off thy fetters, mount up from the body, and go thy way. *They*

They inspire our souls with divination or comfort.

A child of a Christian gentlewoman was so given to prayer from its infancy, that before it could well speak, it would use to get alone, and go to prayer; and as it grew, it was more frequent in prayer; at last, when the child was but five years old, and whipping of his top, on a sudden he flung away his scourge, stick, and top, and ran to his mother, and with great joy said unto her, Mother, I go to God, will you go with me? she answered, My dear child, how dost thou know thou shalt go to God? he answered, God hath told me so, for I love God, and God loves me; mother will you go with me? she answered, Dear child, I must go when God pleaseth: but why wilt thou not stay with me? the child answered, I will not stay, I must go to God. And the child did live about a month after, but never cried for play more, and then fell sick, always speaking that he must go to God, and died in that sickness. *Whyte.*

Charles Bridgeman prophesied his departure, and how strange a prophecy? not only that he must die, but foretelling the very day, On the Lord's day, said he, look to me, neither was that a word of course, which appeared by his often repetition, every day asking, till the day came indeed, What! is Sunday come? At last the look'd-for day came on, and no sooner had the sun beautified that morning, but he fell into a trance. What think you, meant this blessed soul, whilst the body itself used such an action? his eyes were fixed, his face chearful, his lips smiling, his hands and arms clasping in a bow, as if he would have received some blessed angel that there was at hand to receive his soul, but he comes to himself, and tells them about him, how he saw the sweetest boy that ever eyes beheld, and bids them be of good cheer, for he must presently go with him. One standing near, as now suspecting the time of his dissolution, bids him say, *Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit:* Yes, said he, Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit, which is thy due, for why thou hast redeemed it, O Lord my God most true. And presently after he died.

If a man without all observation of physical criticisms shall receive and give intelligence, many days before, what day or hour shall be his last, to what cause can we attribute these, but to our attending angels? *Bp. Hall.*

A gentlewoman lying on her death-bed, Mr. Dod was sent for to her, who spoke of heaven, and to fit her for that glory, she told him that she felt the comforts of God, and that she could as hardly at that time forbear singing, as formerly in child-bearing she could forbear crying, and shortly after she died. *Clark's Mart.*

Mr. Holland the day before his death calling for a Bible, continued his meditations and expositions on the eighth to the Romans, for the space of two hours, but on a sudden he said, O stay your reading, what brightness is this I see? and they said, it is the sun-shine. Nay (saith he) it is my Saviour's shine: Now farewell world, welcome heaven, the day-star from on high hath visited my heart; I doubt not but you all see that light, but I feel a light within me, that none of you all can know. And then turning himself to the minister that preached his funeral sermon, he said, Sir, I desire you would preach my funeral sermon, for this night I die, and speak this from me, that God deals familiarly with man; I feel his mercy, I see his majesty, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God he knoweth, but I see things that are unutterable. And being thus ravished in his spirit, he roamed towards heaven with a cheerful look, and soft sweet voice, but what he said was not understood; at last raising himself on his bed, as Jacob did upon his staff, he ended his blessed life with these blessed words: O thou fiery chariot that camest down to fetch up Elijah, carry me to my happy hold; and all you blessed angels that attended the soul of Lazarus, to bring it to heaven, bear me, O bear me to the bosom of my best beloved. Amen, Amen. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. And so he fell asleep. *Leigh.*

Mrs. Drake, a woman of great temptations, and desertions, at last growing sickly, and free from her desertions, she became incessant in her discourses of heaven, and of the things of God. The Lord's day before her death, she called

called all her children together, and with many admonitions and zealous instructions, and heavenly discourses, she spent much time that day with them; the Tuesday after, Mr. Dod came, and spent some time in heavenly discourses, and they went to prayer; and suddenly as prayer was done, she brake forth in a wonderful manner, in these expressions: Oh, oh, oh, what's this? what's this? what's this? I am undone, undone, undone, I cannot endure it. O, O, O, let me begone, let me begone, I must be gone, I cannot tarry; Oh what shall I do? Lo, lo, the angels are come, they wait and stay for me; Oh dear mother, why hold you me? I must be gone; O he is come, he is come, he is come; Now you have it, you have it, (meaning that they had the issue and fruits of all their prayers) why hold you me? let me be gone, my work is done: O call, call, call! where is my crown, fetch me my crown, bring me my white robes; quickly, quickly, quickly, why run ye not? the angels say: O it overcomes, overcomes, overcomes me: What shall I do? what shall I do? what shall I do? With innumerable such swift expressions as could not be remembred; and withal, she heaved up still all the time with fixed eyes towards the house top, as tho' she had seen some vision, and would have flown away from them all.

Idem.

Robert Milner on his death-bed, was filled with joy for many days together, that he could not hold, but proclaimed the sweetness and goodness of God from day to day; he profest his joys were unutterable; he cried, as if he had been in heaven afore-hand, only once talking with some Christians about him, he cried out, Oh I have lost it, but presently he added, Oh I have it again, it is come, it is come. At last, drawing near his end, he sent for the relator as formerly, and desired his prayers; and whilst he was in duty, commending his soul unto God, he suddenly roused and stirred up his body, crying and saying aloud with much vehemency, The Lord, the Lord merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgressions and sins. And in the very act and heat of his proclaiming the name, and goodness, and

sweetness, and mercy of God, he bowed the head, and gave up the ghost.

Lord Henry Otto being sentenced to death for religion, he told the minister waiting on him, I was troubled, but now I find a wonderful refreshing in my heart; adding with his hands lift up to heaven, I give thee thanks O merciful Father, who hast been pleased to fill me with so much comfort; O now I fear no longer, I will die with joys. As he was going to the scaffold, he said to the minister, I am sure that Christ Jesus will meet my soul with his angels, that he may bring it to an everlasting marriage, where I shall drink of a new cup, a cup of joy for ever. Upon the scaffold, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, Behold I see the heavens open, pointing with his hand to the place, where others also observed a certain brightness which dazzled their eyes. And so he received the stroke of the sword. *Clark's Mart. in Bohemia.* In like manner, Bandicon being on the scaffold with his Father; Behold I see the heavens open, and millions of angels ready to receive us: Father, let us rejoice and be glad, for the joys of heaven are opened to us. *Idem*, in his persecutions of the church in the low countries.

3. They stand ready to receive us into their embraces, and convey us thro' the air into heaven.

Romula being trained up by Redempta, fell into a palsy, that she was fain to keep her bed; but the sickness of her body being sanctified, and tending to her soul's health, on a certain night she hastily called for Redempta, saying, Come mother, come mother, who straight way, with her other disciple rose up, and as they were about midnight by her bed-side, suddenly there came a light from heaven, which filled all the room, and then they heard a noise, as it were of many that came in; the door being shaken, and thrust open, as tho' there had been a great press of people, straight after that light, followed a wonderful pleasant smell, which did greatly comfort their trembling hearts. Romula perceiving that they could not endure that abundance of light, with sweet words comforted Redempta, that stood trembling by her bed-side, saying, Be not afraid mother, for I shall not die at this time. And when she had often repeated

repeated these words, by little and little the light vanished away, but yet the sweet smell remained still. Upon the fourth night after, she called again for Redempra, who coming in with her other disciple as formerly, suddenly they heard two quires singing before the door without, the one as the voices of men that began the Psalms, and the other of women, that answered; and whiles these heavenly funerals were in celebrating before the door, the holy soul departed this life, and was carried in that manner up into heaven; and the higher these two quires did ascend, the less did they hear that celestial music, until at length they heard no more; and then also that sweet and odoriferous smell vanished away. *Greg. Dial. l. 4.*

Fructuosus bishop of Terracona in Spain, with his two deacons, Augurius and Eulogius, suffered martyrdom; the cause of their punishment, was for professing of Christ's name; their judge and condemner was Emilianus, their death was by fire, into which they were all cast, with their arms bound behind them; but their bands and manacles being loosed by the fire, they lifted up their hands to heaven, praising the living God, to the great admiration of them that stood by; praying also that the element which seemed to flee from them, might work his full force upon them, and speedily dispatch them, which was after their request obtained. In the mean space, as they were in the fire, there was a certain soldier in the house of Emilianus who did see the heavens above to open, and these foresaid martyrs to enter into the same; which soldier likewise shewed the sight the same time unto the daughter of Emilianus the president, who beholding the same sight with the soldier, was a present witness of the blessedness of them whom her cruel father had condemned. Fox's acts and monuments.

Philip de Mornay, L. of Plessis Marly, lying on his death-bed, in the midst of his prayers, was heard to say, I fly, I fly to heaven; the angels of heaven are carrying me to the bosom of my Saviour. *Clark's life of Philip de Mornay.*

Mrs. Stubbs on her death-bed, speaking to them that were by, she said, Oh, would God, you saw but what I

see: For behold I see infinite millions of glorious angels stand about me with fiery chariots ready to defend me; These holy angels, these ministering spirits, are appointed of God to carry my soul into the kingdom of heaven; where I shall behold the Lord face to face, and shall see him, not with other, but with these same eyes. Life and death of Mrs Katherine Stubs.

4. They welcome us into heaven, and present us before Christ in his throne.

Helmont, in his vision of the soul, tells, that in the year 1610, after a long weariness of contemplation, that he might acquire some gradual knowledge of his own mind, fallen by chance into a calm sleep, and rapt beyond the limits of reason, he seemed to be in an hall sufficiently obscure; on his left hand was a table, and on it a fair large vial wherein was a small quantity of liquor, and a voice from that liquor spake unto him, Wilt thou have honour and riches? At this unwonted voice he became surprised with extreme amazement; and by and by on his right hand, appeared a chink in the wall, thro' which a light invaded his eyes with unwonted splendor, which made him wholly forgetful of the liquor, voice, and former council. Presently he awakened, but his ancient intense desire of knowing the nature of his soul, in which he had panted incessantly for thirteen years together, constantly remained with him. At length amidst the anxious afflictions of various fortunes, when yet he hoped a Sabbath of tranquility, he had in a vision the sight of his soul: It was a transcendent light, in the figure of a man, whose whole was homogeneous, actually discerning a substance spiritual, cristalline and lucent by its own native splendor. And then it was revealed to him that this light was the same which he had a glimpse of before: If the demand be, what becomes of this light after its separation from the body? Dr. Charleton, who translated the book of Helmont, gave it in this posie; *Lumen de lumine*; light of light, and light to light. The angels of light take these luminous substances, or substantial lights, and present them before the uncreated light, the Lord of glory. What the estate of this light is,

is, and what it will be, is sung by Mr. Moore in his præ-existence of the soul:

*Like to a light fast lock'd in lantern dark,
Whereby by night our weary steps we guide
In slabby streets, and dirty channel's mark,
Some weaker rays thro' the black top do glide,
And flusher streams perhaps from borny side:
But when we've past the peril of the way,
Arriv'd at home, and laid that case aside,
The naked light how clearly doth it ray,
And spread its joyful beams as bright as summer's day?*

*Even so the soul in this contracted state,
Confin'd to these strait instruments of sense,
More dull and narrowly doth operate;
At this hole heats, the sight may ray from thence,
Here tastes, there smells; but when she's gone from thence,
Like naked lamp she is one shining sphere,
And round about hath perfect cognizance;
Whate'er in her horizon doth appear,
She is one orb of sense, all eye, all airy ear.*

*So nothing now in death is to be dread
Of him that wakes to truth and righteousness,
The corps lye here, the soul aloft is fled,
Unto the fount of perfect happiness;
As earth returns to earth, this light no less
Returns to him that gave it, where it is
Presented by the angels with excess
Of strange melodious music, joy and bliss.
O then how doth that great light this light greet and kiss?*

5. They joy in sweet harmony of praises that never shall have an end.

A certain man called Servulus, drawing near his end, called for all such strangers as were in his house, desiring them to sing hymns with him; and as he was singing, all on a sudden he cried out aloud, saying, Do ye not hear the wonderful music which is in heaven? and even in that instant his soul departed this mortal life. All that were present felt a most pleasant and fragrant smell, whereby they argued the verity of his saying; and that he and an-
gels

gels were then in concert fing hallelujahs together in heaven. *Greg. Dial. l. 4.*

Another called Guthlake, drawing near his end, told Berteline his fcholar, The time is come, my dear fon, wherein I muft pafs to Chrift: And lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he yielded up his foul; when at the very inftant Berteline faw, as it were, a fiery tower reaching from heaven down to the earth, the brightness whereof was fo wonderful, that the pale fun might envy fo great a luftre, whilft the angels themfelves were heard to fing melodious tunes of joy. *Felix.*

S E C T. IV.

Of the Duties that concern us in this refpect.

FOR the feveral duties that concern us in this refpect.

1. Weigh not the pains or pangs of death, as if they were intolerable; but rather pitch we the anchor of our hope on the firm ground of the word of God, who hath promifed in our weaknefs to perfect his ftrength,—and not to fuffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear,—and to give his angels a charge to bring us up in their hands, 2 Cor. xii. 9. and x. 13. Pfal. xci. 11. If the Lord lay one hand upon us, he puts another hand under us: Yea, he chargeth his angels to bear us up in their hands, and to allay our pains; it proves fo to many, that the very thoughts of death more pains than the pangs of death. Howfoever, it may comfort us that the angels ftand by us, who either will help us in, or help us thro' thofe pangs of death, that we be not fwallowed up by them.

2. Take we no care of our bodies after death, fave only to commit them to the earth. Methinks the angels might take off that carking care which many have. What if thy body be ufed as the Irifh Papifts ufed the bodies of the dead Proteftants, who caft fome into ditches, and left others to be devoured of ravenous beafts; yea, and digged up others that had been formerly buried, and then left them as dung upon the face of the earth; yet the angels fee and take care that every part, and piece, and member of thy body, fhall be preferved and kept fafe unto that day of our Lord: The earth in her womb, or the fea in her gulphs,

gulphs, or beasts in their bellies, or whatsoever is the grave of the bodies of saints, they are but as God's close chests to keep in them a part of the Lord's own treasure; and when these chests shall be opened, (as they shall be in that great day of the resurrection of saints) then shall those bodies be brought out again by the holy angels; and then shall they be as good, nay, better than ever they were before; for *our vile body shall be made like the glorious body of our Lord and Saviour, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself*, Philip. iii. 21.

3. The nearer we draw to our end, let us draw nearer to God and his holy angels. This is done by having a special care of our souls, and by doing those duties that we owe both to God and his angels. I list not to enter into controversies; I deny that any worship is to be given them, or that we ought to pray to them: Yet (as the contemplative bishop Hall saith) this devotion we do gladly profess to owe to good angels, that tho' we do not pray unto them, yet we do pray to God for the favour of their assistance and protection, and we do praise God for the protection and ministration that we have from them. And yet further we come short of our duty to these blessed spirits, if we entertain not in our hearts an high and venerable conceit of their wonderful majesty, gory and greatness; and an awful acknowledgement and reverential awe of their glorious presence; an holy joy, and confident assurance of their vigilant care; and lastly, a fear to do ought that might cause them to turn away their faces in dislike from us. All these dispositions are copulative; for certainly, if we have conceived so high an opinion of their excellency as we ought, we cannot but be bold upon their mutual interest, and be afraid to displease them by our hainous and abominable sins. The man that is going out of the world, and within a step or two of death, should methinks be very fearful of neglecting the angels, or of grieving the angels. Why alas! if they watch not over him now, if now they inspire not the soul with blessed motions, and pious thoughts; if now they fail of their office, when there is more need of it than ever was, or ever will be; oh what will

will a poor soul do? Come, think we of this ere it be too late: Yea, the nearer we draw to our end, the more tender let us be of our care and respect to these blessed spirits; and who can tell, but as in the very agony Christ was comforted by an angel, so these ministering spirits may at such a time minister comfort and consolation to our souls? We have seen an heaven of joy entring into some before they entred into the joy of heaven.

4. Make we to ourselves friends of the angels, that when we die, they may receive us into everlasting habitations. Thus Christ advised us in respect of riches, make use of them by our beneficence to the poor, that they may pray for you, and make your advantage by being rewarded by God. This is the meaning of it, *Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, Luke xvi. 9. And if worldly riches, that either in getting, using or keeping, do administer matter of sin, (and therefore are called unrighteous mammon) may be so improved, how much more may we improve the angels, and gain by the angels, if we make them our friends? but how should we make them friends? I answer,

1. Let us resemble them in their purity, piety, innocency. Suitableness of spirit and life will breed friendship: If we are but pure in our measure as they are pure, they will delight to befriend us here, and to laye foundation for a far more familiar acquaintance in heaven hereafter:

2. Let us apply ourselves to them, as desirous and willing of their friendship; let us converse with them as friends, assenting to what they say, and making up holy conclusions with them, and replies, which they will find ways to understand. O the blessed motions which they make continually to our souls! Is it not their joy to gain us, and to win upon us? and to that purpose are they not suggesting this and that good thought to save our souls? O then let us answer them in their motions, and receive whatever they administer?

5. Tho' we go thro' the valley and shadow of death, let us fear no evil, for the angels will be with us. It is natural for us to fear death; and indeed as it is the destruction

struction of the creature, and parts body and soul; as it leads the body thro' a dark, dirty way, the grave; and as it leads the soul thro' the devil's territories, the air, it is no wonder if nature startle, and be afraid of it. But the Christian hath many considerations to allay his fear, and to cheer up his spirit: As, 1. Death is but the separation of soul and body; it is not the annihilation of soul and body, but a fair shaking hands between two parting friends. It is as if the wife should take leave of her husband to go to see her father; to whom the husband says, that he will follow after her, and be with her in the morning. Farewel my dear, says the soul, I must go to my Father; and farewel my dear, says the body, I will come after thee, and be with thee in the morning of the resurrection. It is true, they cannot part without many a tear and kiss; but what needs fear? the morning comes as well as the night. 2. The body's passage thro' the grave, tho' dark and dismal, yet it is safe and secure, and fit for rest and sleep: *He shall enter into sleep, they shall rest in their beds*, Isa. lvii. 2. When a righteous man dies, or his body is buried, he is but gone to bed; and therefore we call those places where the dead are laid up and buried, *Dormitories*, or sleeping places; they sleep for a time, but they shall awake, and rise up again at the last day. 3. The soul's passage thro' the air, tho' full of devils, yet it is accompanied with a safe convoy. There is a white regiment of glorious angels, that will bring the souls of saints thro' all perils, *To mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant*, Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. How can the wife fear an enemy, when the husband hath sent a puissant army to convey her safely to himself? How then should we fear the way, or fear death, or devils, when the angels (who are stronger than all enemies) have charge to conduct us to the bridegroom of our souls? and they will not, cannot fail of what they have in charge; they are the army of heaven, the saints own guard, the officers

and

and soldiers of the Lord of hosts; and therefore they will be sure to perform their trust, we need not fear it.

6. Let us prepare and make ready for that glorious welcome which the angels will give us into glory. Would you know how to prepare? 1. Procure their joy by your conversion; there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. The conversion of a sinner is the gratulation of angels; and if they joy at our repentance, how much more will they joy to see you in heaven with them? 2. Procure their love by the strictness and holiness of your lives; live like angels; bring soul and body, as near as may be into a spiritual frame; this is the way of friends to procure welcomes here on earth, if they will but maintain a familiarity, and sympathy, and nearness, and likeness to one another in mind and manners. O thus do you, and then you may expect angel's welcome into that city of glory.

7. Wait upon God with encouragement, that one day the angels will present us to Christ in his throne without spot and blameless. It is now our complaints, Oh the sins whereof we are guilty! and oh wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of death! but the day is coming when we shall be freed from these complaints, as Christ's ministers have a charge, and when they have done their work, they will present us to Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. xi. 2. and as Christ himself hath a charge, and when he hath done his work, he will present us to himself, Jude 24. and to his Father, Col. i. 22. So the holy angels have a charge also, and when they have done their work, they will present us to Jesus Christ; how? even as ministers do, *That I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*, 2 Cor. xi. 2. or as Christ himself doth, *that he might present to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish*, Eph. v. 37. So will the angels do, *even present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*. Let us press on to perfection even upon these hopes, that howsoever it is with us now, surely we shall be faultless, we shall be equal unto the angels, equal in grace, equal in glory; for to that end will they present us

us to Christ on his throne, and accordingly will Christ pronounce his sentence, *Enter you into the joy of your Lord.*

8. Praise we God for this mercy of angel-ministration from first to last. This we must do in heaven, only begin we this tune and ditty whilst we are on earth; and if we cannot do it as we would, let us call in angels to join with us in blessing, praising, and admiring God. This was David's custom, *Praise ye the Lord, praise the Lord from the heavens, praise ye him in the heights; praise ye him all his angels, praise ye him all his hosts,* Psal. cxlviii. 1, 2. The angels desire no better employment than such as this; they love to sing the tune of the gospel most; and therefore stir we up them, and stir we up ourselves with them to be much in praises of our God. Surely he deserves a thousand thousand hallelujahs, and that we should bless him on a thousand stringed instruments: Here is fuel enough, the Lord kindle a great fire in every one of our hearts, to inflame them with the love of such a God as this is. It was the last speech of dying Chrysostom, *Glorify be to God from all creatures.* And if I should die this hour, I could wish my soul in no better temper; 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.—Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkning to the voice of his word. Bless the Lord all ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul,' Psal. ciii. 1, 20, &c.

CHAP. V. SECT. I.

Of the Ministration of Angels at our Resurrection.

THE last period wherein the angels minister to saints, it is from the resurrection to the glorification of their souls and bodies in heaven. In this last, as in all the former, I shall observe, 1. Their ministration. 2. Our duties.

1. For their ministration we may consult these texts,
'And he shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

'The

‘The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.

‘The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of the kingdoms all things that offend, and them who do iniquity:—So it shall be at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.

‘Also I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:—And I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels,’ Mat. xxiv. 31. and xiii. 41, 49. 1 Thess. iv. 16. Luke xii. 8. Rev. iii. 5.

S E C T. II.

Of the kind of Angel-Ministration at that Time.

FOR the kinds of their ministration at this time.

1. The angels will summon all the saints to appear before Jesus Christ in his judgment seat. This is done by the sound of a trumpet, ‘And he shall send his angels with the sound of a trumpet:—The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.’ What this trump is I have discoursed elsewhere, and I take it to be metaphorical, viz. a sound formed in the air like the sound of a trumpet; and for the archangel, it is not limited to one, but that all the archangels, and all the angels of God are thereby understood. O the day, when all the angels shall be sent of Christ to bid all the world appear before him! this is that voice on which Jerome so often meditated, Whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, methinks I always hear that voice of the trumpet sounding in mine ears, Arise ye dead and come to judgment. This is that voice of which Chrysostome said, O the terrible trumpet, that all elements shall obey! it shall shake the world and the rocks, break the mountains, dissolve the bonds of death, burst down the gates of hell, and unite all spirits to their own bodies. This voice shall take from death all her spoils, and cause her to restore again all that she hath taken away from the world. In this ministration the saints may

may rejoice; be it ever so terrible to the wicked, it is nothing to them but an awaking out of sleep, as if the angels should shout and say, 'Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come; arise, arise ye saints and come away.'

2. The angels will gather all the saints together to the judgment seat of Christ. In this are involved these particulars.

1. That the angels will collect the dust of all the bodies of the saints. This all the schoolmen hold, The collection of the dust of the blessed is by the ministry of the blessed angels. They can move and remove bodies as they please, as crass and inferior bodies are in order governed by those that are superior, and more subtil; so are bodies ruled and disposed of by spirits indowed with life. Augustine goeth further, and says, That irrational spirits are governed by rational, and rational creatures that transgress, are governed by rational creatures that are just. Gregory joins with him, saying, Invisible creatures do give motion and sense to carnal bodies which are visible; and so nothing is disposed of in this visible world, but by another creature which is invisible. Hence Aquinas concluded, That in all things which corporally are done of God, he is pleased to use the ministry of angels, and that therefore the gathering of the dust, and the reparation of the bodies of all the saints is only by the ministry of the angels at the resurrection day. Come Christians! keep faith and a good conscience; tho' men prevail over your bodies to kill them, and to scatter the ashes of them all the world over, let never any uncomfortable damp of slavish fear vex your blessed hearts, be you not afraid of evil tidings, or of destruction when it cometh; for the angels have a care of every piece, and part and particular of your bodies; not one hair of your heads, not one atom of the substance of those bodies you bear about you, shall be left in the grave, or in any part of the world, but it shall be gathered by the angels and brought together in one heap or lump.

2. That the angels will form, and fashion and organize those,

those dusts to brought together into perfect, compleat and solid bodies. This also is affirmed by schoolmen, whatsoever appertains to the transmutation of bodies, as to the condensation of those parts, God is pleased therein to use the ministry of angels. Indeed the animation or enlivening of the body by the infusion of the soul, is (as they say) immediately of God, without any operation of angels; for as the soul was immediately created of God, so must the soul be again united to the body by the immediate hand of God himself; yet the collection, preparation, and reparation of our bodies are done by angels. O the power of angels! This eye shall be put to this head, and this hand to this arm, and this arm to this body, and so every part to part, and member to member by the ministration of angels. What need we care tho' all these be eaten of worms, or serpents or other creatures, yea of cannibals or savage men? Certainly they must all be restored again; I shall not want this eye, this finger, this joint, this nail on my finger end at the resurrection day. The hand of the Lord was upon me (said Ezekiel, xxvii. 1, 2, &c) and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, and he commanded me to pass by them round about, and behold they were very many in the open valley, and lo they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bodies live? and I answered, O Lord God thou knowest. Then the Lord bad him prophesy, and as he prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone; and then the sinews of the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them; and then the Lord bade him prophesy unto the wind, Come from the four winds, and breathe upon these slain that they may live. Why thus will it be at the resurrection day; the angels ministry will be like the prophet's prophecy; they will give a shout, and collect the bones, and then put them together, bone to his bone, and then cover them with sinews and flesh, and skin; only the breath or soul must be infused immediately by God himself, and then shall the saints live, and stand upon their feet, as an exceeding great army.

3. That the angels will bring the saints thus raised, organized, and quickned, to Christ's judgment seat. The apostle speaks home to this, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with him in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. A willing welcome force is here upon the saints to transfer them, or carry them into the air, where Christ is in his throne: Now how shall this be done? why, they shall be caught up, saith the apostle, By whom? Some think by the clouds; as if the clouds should first descend, and then enwrap the saints, and so serve as chariots to carry them up to Christ in the air; but I would rather think by angels; as if the apostle should say, all the saints at the last day, both those raised, and those changed, shall be caught up by the holy angels into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And is not this agreeable to the words of Christ, *that angels shall gather together his elect*, Mat. xxiv. 31. Whither together? but to the clouds, or to that place in the air where they shall meet the Lord. O the blessed ministry of endeared angels! they that before carried up Lazarus' soul into Abraham's bosom, must now carry up Lazarus' soul and body, yea all the souls and bodies of all the saints into the air, where shall be the blessedest meeting that ever was; there shall Christ meet with his saints, and never part again. Indeed here sometimes we meet, and anon we part; now he comes, and gives us the kisses of his mouth, but erewhile he is gone and we cry after him, 'O where is he whom my soul loveth: I charge you O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love;' but when the angels shall bring us together at this day, we shall never part more; *For we shall meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord*, 1 Thes. iv. 17.

4. The angels will separate the good and bad, the sheep and goats. They shall gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, and them who do iniquity. They shall sever the wicked from among the just. Mat. xiii. 41, 49. This separation is sometimes given to Christ, 'He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats; and he shall set his

'sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left,' Mat. xxv. 32. Christ shall do it originally, but the angels ministerially, derivatively, and by way of execution. Christ commands it. and the angels accomplish it. O the joy, and O the horror of this particular horror to the wicked, and O what joy will it be to the saints to meet together, and to see all the wicked in the world thrust out of their society; they were before as thorns in their sides, and pricks in their eyes; many a tear did they cost the saints to see their wickednesses; *Rivers of tears run down my eyes, because they keep not thy laws*, Psal. cxix. 136. Many a heart-grieving, heart-vexing thought hath pierc'd the saints to know their sinfulness; just Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; ah poor man, it was an hell to him to dwell with Sodomites; 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8. *For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.* Well, but now they shall never grieve them, trouble them, vex them any more. The angels will not only deliver just Lot out of his ill neighbourhood for a time, but they will free all the righteous from all the unrighteous in the world for ever and ever: Not one Sodomite, not one impenitent sinner shall stand with Christ's sheep on his blessed right-hand; never more shall the saints cry out and say, *Wo is us, that we are constrained to dwell in Mesech, and to have our habitations among the tents of Kedar*; but rather shall they go on with the Psalmist, and say as in the next verse, *Our souls have long dwelt with them that hate peace and holiness, but now we shall never dwell with them any more*, Psal. cxx. 5, 6. This will be the angels work at the last day, they will gather out of the kingdom all things that offend, all scandalous wretches and vile persons, all froward hearts and privy slanderers; all that have high looks and proud hearts, all that David said, he would throw out of his house, and from the city of the Lord, will they also throw out of the kingdom of God, and of Jesus Christ, that they molest not Christ's sheep any longer.

4. The angels will be spectators, admirers, witnesses, approvers of the mystery of godliness in the sentence of
Christ

Christ upon his saints. This piece or part of Christ's mediation in absolving saints, is among the rest of those great mysteries of godliness seen of angels, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Seen? how seen? it is not a bare sight, but such a sight as astonisheth the understanding and takes up the heart of blessed angels; *which things the angels desire to look into*, 1 Pet. i. 12. Their whole spirits are taken up with it, they cannot look off it, but stand and view, and admire, and leap for joy to see the passages; they are rapt up above themselves to hear the blessed sentence coming out of Christ's mouth, *Come ye blessed of my Father*, Luke xii. 8. Nor is that all, but as they see, so they witness; and approve the acts and passages of Christ in rewarding saints; *I will confess them* (saith Christ) *before the angels of God*, xv. John 14. This is at the last day I will take them for mine, I will confess them to belong to me I will pronounce on them the sentence of absolution, I will do to them as if a king should come in company, and choose out one, and salute him familiarly, and call him by his name, and take him by the hand, and confess him before all to be his friend; so will I confess the saints to be my friends, my jewels, my 'peculiar treasure, my temple, and tabernacle where I 'place my name, the dearly beloved of my soul, children 'of the kingdom of heaven itself,' Mal. iii. 17. Psal. cxxxv. 4. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Jer. i. 27. Mat. viii. 12. and xiii. 4. 'Or if more honour can be given them, I will confess 'them to be my garden, my vineyard, my spouse, my second self, one with me, as I and my Father are one,' Cant. iv. 11. and viii 13. Isa. v. 1. John xvii. 21. And be ye witnesses of this my sentence, O ye angels! I would have you to take notice of it, to see it, behold it, hear it, and to witness with what equity and proportion I deal with saints; they confessed me before men, I confess them before angels; they were not ashamed of me, nor of my name before kings and princes, and therefore now am I not ashamed of them, nor of their name: So far am I from blotting their name out of the book of life, that now, I confess their name before my Father, and before his angels, Witness it O ye angels, yea and approve of it, consent to my sentence, acknowledge my goodness, justice, mercy in

saving these souls, by saying Amen, and blessing them welcome into heaven, and then you have done with your ministration.

At this last passage the angels receive that augmentation of joy, which some divines have written. Hall and Andrews, Stars of great magnitude in this orb of the English church, have both supposed that angels themselves shall receive an augmentation of happiness at the day of the last judgment when they shall be freed from all their charge and employment. As rest is the end of all motion, so the perfection of blessedness consists in rest, and therefore the angels being now discharged of that charge which they took at the beginning, they have no more to do, but in one quire to join with the saints, and everlastingly to sing hallelujah, and again hallelujah, and Amen hallelujah.

S E C T. III.

Of the Duties that concern us in this respect.

FOR the duties that concern us in this respect.

1. Meditate as if you heard the angels sounding their trumpets, and saying, come out of your graves, and appear before Jesus Christ your judge. Surely these ministering spirits, these especial messengers, these new covenant officers that now wait on us, and as tender nurses will ere long lay us asleep in the bed of the grave, will in the morning of the resurrection awake us out of sleep, and say to us, as the angels to John, Come up hither, Rev. iv. 1. And is not this worthy our morning thoughts, or evening thoughts, or midnight thoughts? When we are awake in the night, and compass with darkness, and all is quiet and still, suppose then we heard the sound of angels shouting in the air, now souls come to your sentence, either of eternal weal, or eternal wo: Methinks this meditation should work, and make every one of us say, Lord if it were thus, what would become of my soul? In what case were I? In what condition were I? If the angel now sounded? was my repentance such when I went to bed, as that now I dare look the judge in the face? was my faith so active, or is it now so strong, that I can with confidence go to Christ, and say, speak Lord, speak out the doom that

that thou intendest to pass upon my soul, for I trust in thee; if so, it is well; the Lord keep us continually in such a prepared frame: But if it be otherwise, O let us think of it, and prepare for it; let us not put off repentance from day to day, but let the instant or present moment be the time of turning from all sin to God, and let us become now, as we would wish to be then, when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, It were a blessed meditation that would work us into such a frame. Now the Lord come in, and both let us at it, and appear to us in it.

2. Cheer up ye saints, 'arise, shine, for your light is coming, and the glory of the Lord will rise upon you: 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to 'their windows?' Isa. lx. 1, 2. No sooner are the sun-moons given, but all the saints shall be gathered together 'from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the 'other,' Mat. xxiv. 31. Oh what a sight will it be to see the eastern saints, and western saints, and northern saints, and southern saints, flying on the wings of angels to Christ on his throne! Why here is matter of joy. If our evidences are but clear, if we are but assured that he that is our judge hath shed his blood for us, and given himself for us, I wonder that we are not spiritually cheerful. Come, tho' the world scatter us, persecute us, drive us to holes and hills, yet we shall meet together at the great marriage-supper of the Lamb, and there will be joy indeed; the very fore thoughts of this should, methinks, fill our hearts with joys unspeakable and full of glory: 'Let 'us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is 'come, and his wife hath made herself ready. — Write, 'blessed are they who are called unto the marriage-supper of 'the Lamb, these are the true sayings of God,' Rev. xix. 7, 9. Blessed sayings, in which, if we open the eye of faith, we may see matter of truest joy, and spiritual rapture. We are all invited, if we are but saints, to the marriage supper of the Lamb, 'Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God,' ver. 17. If you say, How should we come that must die and be buried in

graves, till we rot, and return to our first principles? I answer, these remoras will not, cannot hinder; for our very dusts shall be carefully gathered by the hands of angels; and when they are gathered and brought together, they shall be put into form and fashion, far better and perfecter than now they are by the ministration of angels; and when they are formed, and fashioned, and spiritualized, we shall be caught up by the angels into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, thus far will the angels minister to us, and therefore what should hinder, but that we must all meet him, and feast with him? And if so, how merry should we be in the mean time, who are admitted and invited to this gracious and glorious feast? Away, away all horrors of guiltiness, false fears, slavish terrors, damps and droopings! Christians, we must part, a time ly and sleep in solitude and rottenness, but we shall meet again; there will be such a congregation of saints at the last day, as never was since the world's creation, and as we hope to be a part of that general assembly, and church of the first born which are written in heaven, let us now rejoice in the Lord, and again rejoice.

3. Comply with the angels in separating yourselves from the society of the wicked. I know the command, *Let both grow together until the harvest*, Mat. xiii. 36. The angels do not, nor must they separate the wheat and tares before the last day, but then will God say to his reapers, 'Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.' Come then, and do you now on your part that which the angels will do on their part at the last day. You will say, What! would I have you separatists? I answer not in opinions, or heterodox doctrines, but in conversation; my meaning is, I would not have you to run with the world into the same excess of riot: If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or railer, or a drunkard, or extortioner, I would have you with such an one not to keep company, no not to eat, 1 Cor. iv. 4. and v. 10, 11. And yet that I may not be mistaken, some kind of society, or familiarity, I allow with all; there is a society more common, and cold, and general,

rat, as in trading, bargaining, buying, selling, &c. and this Christians must needs exercise with the men of this world, except they run out of the world: But there is a society more special, dear, and intimate, and in this respect 'I have written unto you, saith the apostle, not to keep company with fornicators,' 1. Cor. v. 9. *i. e.* not to have any ordinary, voluntary, friendly, dear and intimate society with them. Alas! who in his right wits would run upon a man whom he sees hath the plague sore running upon him? and what Christian in his right mind spiritually, having any fear of God in his heart, life in his soul, or tenderness in his conscience, would delightfully thrust himself into the company of wicked men? It was writ of Jesus Christ that he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, Heb. vii. 26. and such a separatist was David, 'I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers, I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked,' Psal. xxvi. 4, 5. And indeed to think of the angel's work at the last day, it were enough to make us comply, and to prepare for such a work all the days of our life. Oh what should we do with them in our hearts and dearest thoughts, who shall have no better companions hereafter than devils and the damned!

4. Confess Christ before men, that he may confess you at the last day before the angels of God. You may think you are in prosperity and flourish, you fear not martyrdom, there is not the least occasion of the confession of Christ, his truth and gospel, unto death or danger, as the word imports: And therefore this last advice is not so seasonable. But I answer, 1. We see the boldness of our common adversaries. Error on all hands grows insolent, and proud, and daring; so that now God calls to us from heaven, Who is on my side? who? 2. We know not how soon occasion may be both for confession and martyrdom. Clarke observes, that usually before any great persecution beset the church, the holy men of those times observed, that there was some great decay of zeal, and of the power of godliness, or some mutual contentions and quarrels amongst the people of God; or some such sin or other

other that provoked God against them; and then as the Shepherd sets his dog upon the sheep, when they go astray, to bring them in, so God lets loose wicked persecutors upon his own children, to bring them in unto himself. And he applies this to ourselves. It is true, saith he, thro' God's mercy we yet enjoy the gospel of peace, and the peace of the gospel, but how short a time it may continue no man knows. — This we know, that schisms, heresies and blasphemies never abounded more in the church of England than at this day; that the spirit of division never rag'd more; that profaneness never more out-faced the glorious sun-shine of the gospel than at this day, and surely these are the forerunners of judgment. O then let us learn this lesson, as we would have comfort at the last day! Come what will come, let us confess him before men; let no creature make us to deny the Lord Jesus Christ; if his truth call for it, let us stand it out against all his enemies, yea, even against the gates of hell, and devil, and all. And then we may comfortably hope that when Christ shall come in the clouds with his mighty angels, he will confess us, and pronounce a blessed sentence upon us before God, angels and men. Amen, even so be it. Amen, and Amen.

A POEM of DUBARTAS in the first day of the Week.

*O sacred tutors of the saints! you guard
Of God's elect, you pursuivants prepar'd
To execute the counsels of the highest;
You heavenly courtiers, to your King the mightiest,
God's glorious heralds, heaven's swift harbingers,
Twixt heaven and earth, you true interpreters;
I could be well content, and take delight
To follow further your celestial flight,
But that I fear to faint — Here then an end.*

SOLI DEO GLORIA

An APPENDIX containing some *Objections and Answers.*

IT is Zanchius' saying, *Doctrina de officiis angelorum, deque illorum ministerio utilissima est: Rix* it is then that such a point of religion should be buried in oblivion, and be made no use of.

I cannot say that in this whole treatise there is not the least error; *for we know but in part, and we prophecy but in part, 1 Cor. xliii. 9.* Yet this I can say, that I have not purposely, wilfully or heartily erred, *Errare possum, hereticus non ero.* It may be, tho' I deliver nothing but truth, I cannot satisfy all, and therefore have desired some of my godly and learned brethren to object what they can; and wherein they are not satisfied, to put in their exceptions against any part or piece in this treatise. And one hath done me that honour to send me his objections. It may please God that by this means truth may shine clearer, and therefore I shall here, by way of appendix, lay down his objections and my answers, and so refer both to the reader, desiring God's blessing may be upon all.

The Objections of a dear Friend answered.

Object. **I**N Chap. VI. Sect. III. second reason in respect of angels, you cite 1 Tim. iii. 16. *Seen of angels, i. e. in my eye.* Jesus Christ was seen of angels, testified unto by their visible appearances and services to him at his nativity, in his passion, at his resurrection, and his ascension; and not the mystery of Christ and godliness, so properly referred to in this place.

Answer. Aretius tells us on that text, (give me leave to bring all the authors in their own language,) *Id quidem verum est secundum historicum, nam in nativitate, jejuniis, passione, resurrectione, ascensione, semper adsunt angeli spectatores;*

*spectatores; sed mihi videtur, de majori quadam visione loqui, qua se, contra angelorum opinionem, Christus mirabili ratione duas naturas univit in una persona, quod nec homines, nec angeli satis explicare possunt, et ob id summe stupore videntur, et viderunt id in nativitate, totaque Christi historia, plenius tamen in ascensione stupendum mysterium Christum hominem ad dextram Dei Patris ascendere,—haec mysteria sunt, &c.——*And is not this the scope of the text? is not this a main part of the great mystery of godliness, that he who is the true God manifested in the flesh, was seen of angels?

Objeſt. In the second reason in respect of the saints, upon John xii. 31. you say Christ hath bound the devils by his angels. Bound the devils are, but by what chains we know not, it may be by the good angels ministry, but can we say peremptorily it is so?

Anſw. Learned Zanchius saith thus, *Per angelos bonos nunc detinentur dæmones, ne mala hominibus inferant, ut vere dixerit Christus, Nunc princeps mundi ejicitur foras, —Et ubique in scripturis legimus cacodæmones semper fuisse victos ab angelis bonis, si quando narratur inter ipsos pugnatum fuisse; ut in Daniel, et in Apocalyp. legitur, et Thob. viii. 3. dicitur angelus Thobiz dæmonem vinculis constrinxisse.*

Objeſt. In Sect. IV. you say, the good angels by their general charge save wicked men alive; it may seem strange, unless it were any where said, that God used them to this purpose; who do they save them from? not from God's stroke; and is it from the devils? they do him service, and however God's restraint on the devils from any such cruelty may be sufficient.

Anſw. How? angels save the wicked from God's stroke? no, but from the devils, nor crosseth this God's restraint, but rather subserves it, that the devils would kill, see 1 Pet. v. 8. *Obambulat ut leo, quærens quem devoret. Leo sanguine delectatur, ita diabolus non contentus est fortunis et honoribus hominum exuisse, sanguinem ipsum appetit, Aretius.* And thus God permitting it, he dealt with Job's servants and children, Job xvii. 19. Hence Zanchy tells us, *Cum diaboli hostes nostri sint capitales,*
et

et nos circumstant, nisi angeli boni ex mandato Dei, et pro suo erga nos amore, adversus illos tuerentur, diaboli irruerent in nos.

Object. In Sect. V. nothing is said by you, but what you quote bishop Hall to have said the same; yet all those instances are of what God did extraordinarily by his angels: They were all miracles, or next to them. And tho' we may thus far take comfort from what God did by angels to them of old, that he will do for his servants what is good for them in the like cases: Yet whether he will do it this way, viz. by an angel, we cannot say, unless the angel appear as sensibly for us, as he did for them: Whether had the saints of God failed or no, if they had looked at their deliverances to be wrought by the ministry of angels, unless by special sensible manifestations it had been made known unto them.

Ans. This objection hath in it the substance of most that follows, and therefore give me leave to enlarge.

1. In that you grant, I say nothing but what bishop Hall hath said before me; this clears me of the imputation of novelty: All that knew him, could not but know that he was free from curiosity, or inordinate desires of novelty in matters of religion.

2. But all his instances, you say, are of what God did extraordinary by his angels; they were all miracles, or next to them. And another joins with you, saying, That several of the texts brought for the proofs of particulars, are from the apparitions of angels to particular persons, which was extraordinary, and cannot prove that such a ministration of them is now ordinary. That the angels can work miracles, unless as God's instruments, I deny, nor are any of the instances of that nature, as if any miracle were done by them of their own natural power: Indeed they do *miranda*, but not *miracula*; they do such things as you call next to miracles, or wonderful things. Possunt naturali virtute in res corporeas, quicquid, corporibus a natura contingere potest, non tamen miracula efficere, nisi quatenus Deus illorum ministerio in edendis miraculis uti solet, Bucan. But (say you) if they were not miracles, yet were they extraordinary. It is true, in respect

spect of us we judge them so, because they are above our ordinary actions; but not in respect of them; Nam quicquid angelus sua propria facit virtute, illud fit ex ordine, et non supra ordinem totius nature creatæ. Zanch. It is ordinary with them to work above our power, or the power of any other creature; and hereby we may know when such and such events run in their wonted natural course, and when the angels or spirits are actors in them. The manner of their operations; (saith the judicious bishop Hall) and the occasions and effects of them shall soon deliver them to a judicious eye. But those scriptures (speak (as it is objected) of the apparitions of angels, which was extraordinary, and prove not that such a ministration of them is now ordinary. You may call (if you please) the apparitions of angels extraordinary, but not their workings; or if extraordinary in respect of us, and our power, yet not in respect of them and their power. I perceive thro'out your objections, you are much on their extraordinaries; and that such things as we affirm now they do, are not to be ascribed (as you say) ordinarily to their ministry; I shall therefore in a few words insist on their ordinary power.

In scripture they are called *mighty*, 2 Thess. i. 7. *Strong*, Rev. v. 2. and *to excel in strength*, Psal. ciii. 20. and this their power they exercise or put forth either immediately by themselves, or mediately by natural agents, as they are moved by them: 1. For their mediate workings, they can ordinarily interficere et loco movere; unus angelus totum fere Senacheribi exercitum interfecit, et reliquos in fugam vertit, et Petrum et reliquos apostolos e carcere eduxit; et Philippum e loco in locum transtulit. Immediate hæc, et alia similia ab angelis facta sunt, et fieri possunt. 2. For their mediate power they can ordinarily generare hominem, aut aliud animal; non per se generatio enim fit a simili specie; at vero possunt in animali uno vim gignendi excitare, et in altero vim concipiendi, et ea simul ut coeant, efficere; atque ita per hæc animalia a se mota, et ad generationem præparata, animal aliud generare. But that which is more to our purpose, their ordinary power towards men, either refers to their bodies, or their senses external

external and internal; or to their soul. 1. Their bodies, they have the same power on them as on other animals, 2. For their external senses they can easily affect them. Ut cum oculos Sodomitarum perstrinxerant, ut non potuerint osium domus Lothi cernere; ita oculos Syrorum, et excitantur strepitum in eorum castris; et hujusmodi alia per multa extant exempla, Gen. xix. 1. 2 Kings vi. 18. and vii. 6. And for this the internal senses, they can easily move them; Constat e scripturis, angelos sæpe apparuisse patribus, in somnis, et multa illis ostendisse et revelasse; sic Mat. ii. apparuit angelus in somnis ipsi Josepho, &c. 3. For their souls, Suo modo in nostras tum mentes, tum voluntates agere dicantur; dicitur suo modo, quia non possunt angeli mentem ipsam illustrare, aut voluntatem efficaciter flectere, quod est spiritus sancti proprium, sed tanquam spiritus sancti instrumenta, excitare verbi auditi phantasmas, veritatem aienti proponere, et eam commonefacere, ut ei assentiatur, et ad bonam aliquod voluntatem nostram, instar conciliatorum, suadendo; et interne quasi loquendo et agendo, modo spirituali instigare. Sic, Heb. i. 14. dicit eos esse administratores spiritus in ministerium missos, &c. Quibus obsecro actionibus salutem nobis administrant? aut tantam externis, quæ corpora denotant conservant? annon potius actionibus, quæ in ipsas quoque mentes nostras penetrant; et David ait, Qui facit angelos suos spiritus, et ministros suos flammam ignis, Psal. civ. 4. Si sicut flamma ignis, flammæ duplex est actio, una illuminare, altera calefacere, et ascendere; annon igitur propheta indicat angelorum erga nos actiones, et in intellectu illuminando, et in voluntate ad amorem Dei accendenda versari? neque enim ratione corporum nostrorum, sed animorum potius istis nominibus appellantur: Bucan. et Ranch. Here is a scheme of their ordinary power, given by the learned. And when we read of these, or of any such things in the scripture, surely those scriptures prove that such things were done then by angels ordinarily, as on their part; and that now they may be done in ordinary as well as then. Will you say they were done then, but not now? or what was done then is not now to our purpose, or for our present learning? the apostle saith

saith otherwise, 'Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come; —for whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we thro' patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope,' 1 Cor. x. 11. Rom. xv. 4. On this text saith Zanchius, *Hæc etiam omnia quæ de officiis angelorum in scripturis traduntur, ad nostram maxime pertineant consolationem.* It is worthily questioned by Mr. Mede, Are his *insignia* in the gospel less worthy of the angels attendance than those of the law? or have the angels since the nature of man, Jesus Christ our Lord, became their head and king, gotten an exemption from their service? surely not. To the same purpose saith the author above cited, Were the rudiments of the law worthy of an attendance of angels, and are the churches of the gospel destitute of so glorious a retinue? Is the nature of man made worse since the incarnation of the Son of God, or have the angels purchased an exemption from their ministry since Christ became our brother in the flesh? we have little reason to think so; my text saith, *Are they not all ministering spirits?* truly they are, as well as were, and so they will be to the end of the world. Indeed now are not such apparitions as formerly were, In V. T. *pueri erant, ideo externis apparitionibus angelorum egebant ad sui consolationem,* Zanch. Besides a greater measure of the Spirit's being now given, God would have us now converse with the Spirit, and these spirits in a more invisible way; and besides we have faith now enabling us to converse with the angels in a way more spiritual: Which made Mr. Byfield say, It is sure that the angels are always in garrison for the elect, pitching their tents round about them that fear God; that which Elisha and his man saw with their bodily eyes, every believer may be assured of by faith. Their appearings are ceased, saith Mr. Laurence, but not their workings; tho' their converse be not so sensible, yet it is as real. — This remains a sure truth, that they are of mighty use to us, and the things communicated to our inward man, is ordinarily the administration of angels.

3. You grant, that we may thus far take comfort what God did by angels to them of old, that he will do for his servants what is good for them in like cases; yet whether he will do it in this way, *viz.* by an angel, we cannot say, unless the angel appears as sensibly for us as he did for them. And are you not in this too much led by sense? faith is the evidence of things not seen, and not of things visible. If God do such, or the like things for his servant's good, either he doth it immediately or mediately. For my part, saith Mr. Baxter, I believe that God's works on the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate, and that good angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body. But will you not believe except you see the print of the nails? *Nimium profecto sumus Thomistæ, Joh xx. nisi videro, nisi digitum immisero, nisi obversetur sensibus, ut palpem, et amplexibus teneam; at quia non vides animam tuam, aut alterius, dubitabis te esse animatum? aut quia turbantem non conspexerunt angelum aquam Betheldæ negarent Judæi piscinam motam fuisse vel turbatam, Dr. Prideaux, de scala visibilium ad invisibilia.* Suppose a good work done (tho' no miracle neither) above the power of a man, or any visible secondary cause, there is one (bishop Hall) can tell you, that this carries its own evidence without disputes, that if it be not (as we say) of nature, it must needs be of an higher efficiency, *viz.* of angels. And Dr. Manton saith as much, That those instances usually alledged in the Old and New Testament, are patterns and presidents by which we may know what to expect; their tutelage then was more visible and sensible, because the church newly planted, needed to be confirmed, but God would have us live by faith, and expect all our supports in a more spiritual way; tho' we have not visible apparitions, yet we have real experiments of their succour: The evil angels appear not, yet we do not doubt of the hurt done by them. Oh how sad is it, that we should believe that the evil angels hurt us, tho' they appear not sensibly against us; and yet we will not believe the good angels help us without sensible or visible apparitions thereof.

4. You ask, whether had the saints of God failed or no;

If they had looked at their deliverances to be wrought by the ministry of angels, unless by some sensible manifestation it had been made known unto them? I answer, No, they had not failed; but rather if they had been so spiritual, and had believed as we do, they would have had more in them of the gospel-spirit: John xxviii. 29. *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believed.*

Object. In Sect. VIII. second motive, The angels are an ordinance ever present, the proofs make out this, that no place can shut us so in, but God can send his angels unto us; but that they are with us unless specially sent, those places in the Acts seem not to prove; they came in extraordinarily, and were owned to do it, because seen to do it.

Answer, You say, the proofs make out, that no place can shut us so in, but God can send his angels in unto us; which is enough to prove, That men may take from us our Bibles, teachers, pastors, or they may imprison us where we cannot enjoy them, but they cannot take from us the holy angels. But you say, they are not with us, unless especially sent as we suppose them sent; But, say you, when sent to the apostles they came in extraordinarily, and were owned to do it, because seen to do it; that they came in extraordinarily, was not from their presence or mission, but (if any thing was extraordinary) it was from the apparition, fulgor and light that shined in the prison, and from their opening the prison doors, and bringing them forth, and speaking audibly, *Go, &c. Arise up quickly, &c.* And from their manifestations the angels are owned; but if there had been none of these apparitions, would you have denied angel presence? cannot the angels be with us, but they must sensibly appear to us? Such an opinion is a step to Sadducism. And therefore our worthies say otherwise: 'Angeli quorum curam ex Dei mandato gerunt, eos nunquam penitus omnive officii genere deserunt,' Zanch. l. 3, c. 17. And, O ye blessed spirits (saith Bp. Hall) ye are ever by me, ever, ever about me; I do as good as see you, for I know you to be here, I reverence your glorious presence, I bless God for you, I walk awfully because I am ever in your eyes, I walk confidently, because I am

I am ever in your hands. If you alledge that of Acts xii. 10, that when the iron gate was opened, and one street passed, the angel forthwith departed from Peter; Dingley answers, that the departing of the angel, was only his disappearing, or laying down that bodily shape that was assumed; so Christ is said to leave, and not to leave the world; we affirm therefore that good angels are our constant associates till death; tho' their influence may be suspended, yet their presence is continued, and they never throughout our life do utterly and totally forsake us; they are charged to be with us, and to keep us in all our ways. As a shadow followeth the body without leaving it, or lagging behind, so do the angels accompany believers in all their walks and ways.

Object. In motive 3. They improve other ordinances. 1. In religious services. The instances are still extraordinary Acts x. Luke i. They came on peculiar messages, and such as seldom any now receive; to say that such a seasonable, suitable thought in prayer was put in by an angel, because God visibly sent an angel, upon such extraordinary occasions, to Peter and Zachary, when they were at prayer, is not so easy to me.

Ans. Here you strain my words; I do not deliver it as my own opinion but as the opinion of others, saying, It is said that they suggested suitable, seasonable and pious thoughts at such a time. So Mendoza in Reg. 1. vol. 1. c. 2. §. 244. p. And for those texts in Acts x. Luke. i. They were not urged to prove the extraordinary part (as you call it) of their apparition, occasions, &c. but to prove their ordinary ministration in quickning, cheering, suggesting pious thoughts at such a time; if you would but remember that one passage cited before, That all those instances of the Old and New Testament are patterns and presidents by which we may know what to expect. You would no more oppose extraordinaries to ordinaries; I hope these are comparable, altho' we have not the like visible apparitions, yet we may have the like real experiments of angel-ministration, altho' now they do not appear in bodily shapes, yet the same offices are by them spiritually and mysteriously performed to us. And on this score are those

texts cited by me, and (as my guides) by those eminently learned and godly divines, Usher, Clark, Manton, Hall, Bucanus, Polanus, Dieft, and others, 'as you may see in the *Prolegomena*.

Object. In motive 4. *We fight against principalities and powers*; that is said, but not said by the help of principalities and powers of another kind; that of Revel. xii. 7. refers no doubt to some remarkable dispensation in the church; and for Revel. xx. 1, 2. is not that angel that seals up the devil in the bottomless pit, Jesus Christ?

Ans. We fight against principalities and powers by the help of God; and yet the angels may instrumentally help us. Surely good angels contend with the evil angels, and stand most valiantly on our side; the combat is not only between men and devils, but between angels and angels, Dan. x. 13. Jude 9. Michael opposed Satan about the body of Moses, so do the angels still oppose the kingdom of darkness, about the bodies and souls of the saints, whilst they live, and after death, faith Trap. That of Rev. xii. 7, 8. you say, refers to some remarkable dispensation in the church, which is enough for me: But Zanchy adds, in Apoc. 12. *Legimus Michaelē pugnassee cum dracone, nempe pro defensione Ecclesiæ, et singulorum, piorum adversus omnes diaboli insidias atque injurias.*—And for Rev. xx. 1, 2. Some understand it of Jesus Christ; others of Constantine, but others according to the letter of an angel. I avoid controversies; and to our purpose the other texts are sufficient; when Satan besiegeth us, 'vim habet oppugnantis angelus,' faith Rivius. The angels ward off his blows, and help us against him both in soul and body, faith Dyke.

Object. In lib. 2. c. 1. §. 3. The instance about the woman that was prevented from taking physic, what was there of an angel in that? she by the good providence of God quickned that night. Can we say the angels kept the child in the second instance? natural causes wrought, the fire burned the mother's belly, the child came out in the fire, was soon caught out by the standers-by. God did thus far preserve it, but whether mediate angels, or no, who can say? And besides the doctrine is touching the angel.

angels ordinary ministration about birth and infancy: These experiences are of what was done extraordinarily.

Ans. Your objection is both against ordinary and extraordinary providences, as done by angels; if ordinary, then nature; if extraordinary then God (say you) preserves immediately. You object in another place, as if I should admit of no providence by angels; but here it seems you admit of no providence by angels. I desire we may both understand aright. The learned inform us, that the keeping of angels is nothing else but a certain execution of divine providence concerning us; 'Notandum est angelorum custodiam, nihil aliud esse quam certam quandam divinæ providentiæ executionem,' Zanch. l. 3. c. 17. Hence are the angels called servants of providence, and instruments of providence. Mr. Pemble tells us, that providence is divided into mediate and immediate; immediate is, when God by himself, without the ministry of the creatures, doth preserve and govern things: So he governs immediately, and preserves the first and universal cause of things. Mediate providence is when God governeth creatures by creatures, as by means and instruments; for God useth the ministry of second causes, both natural and voluntary, either men or angels, which are the most excellent instruments of providence in governing the world, as appeareth by places of scripture, in which their ministry is set forth, both generally and especially. 1. Generally, Heb. i. 4, 'Being made so much better than angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they; are they not all ministering spirits,' Psal. ciii. 20. 'Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, ye that do his commandment, &c. Bless the Lord all ye his host, ye ministers of his,' &c. Psal. civ. 4. Who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire. 2. Specially, about the elect, 'For he shall give his angels charge over thee,' Psal. xci. 11. And about the wicked, Psal. xxxv. 5. 'Let them be as chaff before the wind, and let the angels of the Lord chase them.' 2 Kings xix. 35. 'And it came to pass that night that the angel of the Lord,' &c. Isa. xxxvii. 36. 'Then the angel of the Lord went forth,'

etc Of this meditate providence, two things especially are to be noted. 1. God useth means not necessarily for want of power in himself, but of his own free will in the abundance of his goodness. 2. Providence excludes it, but includes means, which if we neglect (unless God hath revealed that he will not use them) unconscionably we tempt him. Thus far Mr. Pemble. To apply it; you grant a special and more than ordinary providence is the preservation of those children mentioned in the objection; and if God's works of particular providence in this world are mediate as Pemble, and usually mediate as Baxter, whether or to whom can we refer their preservations, but to the ministration of angels? The doctrine, you say, is touching the angels ordinary ministration, and such was this, in respect of the angels, the ministry was ordinary. It is ordinary with them though it may seem extraordinary to us.

Object. In §. 4. Psal. cxxxix. 14, 16. and xvii. 6. and xxii. 9. and cxxxix. 16, 17, 18. the texts seem to refer the whole work to God's immediate hand. If these scriptures give any hint of the angels in the work of infants preservations, I could better subjoin, *and how precious are your thoughts unto me, O ye angels of God!*

Answer. It is true, the scriptures alledged, refer the whole work of preservation in the womb and in our infancy to God, but not to God's immediate hand. If God's immediate hand did all to infants, why are the angels called their angels? what need of angels ministration as to them? If you say there is no need, sith God if he pleases can easily guard them without angels; I answer, the need is not (as Mr. Pemble tells you) by reason of any defect in God to supply his want of power, but further to enlarge and demonstrate his goodness, God could do it of himself, but having ordained such ranks of creatures, he makes all to serve for his own blessed and glorious ends. 'Tis all one to me, whether in his acts of providence of this nature, he express the angels, yea or no; for if usually he works by them, it is as much as if he had named them.

Object. In Chap. 2. Sect. 1. Mat. 18. 10. that the angels refer to the children in nature, I question. 1. Be-
cause

cause these are not apt to be despised; most pity and love little ones. 2. It is not certain the child was an elect child that stood there in the midst, and the good angels have not a charge. 3. Christ speaks indefinitely of these little ones there meant, their angels, that is, the angels of all these there spoken of; Now, do the angels look to every child that is born in its infancy and childhood? The instances of Christ's angel, Hagar's, &c. all extraordinary, and the angels were seen and heard in this ministration, and therefore herein justly acknowledged: But it is not so with us.

Ans. By little ones, you see I do not exclude the adult, nor would I exclude little children, whom our Saviour propounds as a pattern for the imitation of the adult, ver. 2, 3, 4, 6. but I would rather take all in. Thus Dr. Prideaux, and Perking and Zanchy, Cum enim Mat. 17. Christus dicit de infantibus, Angeli eorum semper vident faciem Patris, quid aliud innuere voluit quam singulis Pueris, ac proinde etiam adultis, certos angelos, tanquam Paedagogos et rectores traditos, et constitutos esse. Also Musculus, on the place saith thus, Qui sunt illi pusilli? quidam exponunt de pusillis non ætate, sed æstimatione; quidam vero de pusillis ætate; nihil prohibet de utrisque intelligere, licet ex eo, quod non simpliciter dicit, unum ex pusillis, sed addit, *istis*: Possit videri dictum de ætate pusillis, qualis erat puellus, quem advocatum statuerat in medium discipulorum. But you reason it thus; it cannot be understood of such, 1. Because such are not apt to be despised, most pity and love little ones. On the contrary, in Mark x. 13. You may find the disciples rebuking those that brought children to Christ. Whence some observe, that Satan bears a peculiar ill will to children, he hath an evil eye upon them, endeavouring by all means to keep them from Christ, and to hinder their salvation; and this Satan doth many ways. 1. Thro' the indulgency of parents, suffering them to have their own wills. 2. Thro' evil education, poisoning their tender years. 3. Sometimes under a pretext of religion, thus of old he instigated not only the heathen, but even God's own people, to offer up their children to sacrifice to Molech, unto devils,

1 Kings xxii. 10. 4. By keeping them from ordinances, thus he infligated the disciples here to repel these infants from coming near to Christ, and of late times he hath infligated the Anabaptists to take up this quarrel to prohibit the baptism of infants. And is not this to despise little ones? Most pity and love them, but you see all do not so. 3. You reason again, It is not certain that the child was an elect child that stood here in the midst, and then the good angels have not a charge. Musculus on the place argues that child to be a believer, and therefore elect; his words are thus, *Talem fuisse, qui in fide Christi aliquid potuerit instituti, argumento esse poterit, quod evangelica commemorat advocatum esse, et constitutum a Christo, in medium apostolorum,—et quia res gesta est in aedibus Petri Capernaum, in quibus Christus aliquoties, imo sæpenu-mero comparuit et miraculose etiam focrum Petri excitavit, credibile est hunc puerum in fide Christi institutum fuisse nonnihil, quantum per aetatem licuerit.* But, 3. You reason again, Christ speaks indefinitely of these little ones, their angels, *i. e.* the angels of all these there spoken of; now do the angels look to every child that is born in its infancy and childhood? No: if they are not elect, the good angels have no charge of them. Christ speaks not of all children elect and reprobate, but of these little ones, *addit istis*, pointing to such like as that little child was, whom he set in the midst of them. Ita et hic puellus et omnes Christianorum infantes ad Christum pertinentes, deque numero fidelium existentes, &c. Musculus. The instances of Christ and Hagar, which you call extraordinary, is answered before.

Object. In Sect. II. God keeps children wonderfully, but whether by angels, or by his own hand, I cannot say, for scripture doth not say it: It is as easy for God to do it without them as by them:—For health a poor child may recover; but as God doth, not bless the physic man gives, so he may not use the other physicians, but do it himself. That instance of the angel at the pool, Dr. Hammond makes an angel there a messenger, and the remedy natural, &c. but if done by an angel, this was extraordinary,

traordinary, and in a visible way, and known to be done by an angel.

Ans. I hope you will say, God hath the same care to keep children as the adult: And the scripture saith, *He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways*, Psal. xci. 11. If yet you will say, it is as easy for God to do it without them as by them; is not this to be wise above measure? By the same reason you may say, What need of magistrates or ministers in state or church? What need of any secondary means for our temporal or spiritual good? It is no contradiction that God will watch over us by his own providence, and that he will have his angels to attend us; this takes not away from his care, but hereby he declares and conveys his care and love unto us. *Quonquam per se ipsum omnia potest Deus, nec propter præstantissimam virtutem, atque infinitam potentiam illo prorsus ad agendum instrumento indiget, tamen ita sanctissimæ ejus voluntati visum est, (cujus sunt rationes, consiliaque occulta nobis) ut ad ministerium suum atque ad efficienda ea quæ ipse vult, rebus a se conditis uteretur, Rivius.* For health, you say a poor child may recover, tho' God may not use other physicians, whether men or angels, but do it himself. I question not what God may do, for he may do what he will; but whether he usually works immediately, or by instruments, you have heard before. That instance of the angel at the pool, you say Dr. Hammond interprets was done by a messenger, and by natural means, but all the expositors that I ever read before him, say it was done by an angel, and I believe you are of the same mind. As for your objection of extraordinary, it is now become so ordinary, that I need say no more to it.

Object In Sect. 2. The instances in Acts viii. 20. and x. 16. are particular still, and extraordinary, in Mat. xxi. 16. Those Hosanna's because above nature, or acquired parts, or parents education, doth it therefore follow, that certainly they were taught them by the angels? is this sufficiens enumeratio Partium? was the spirit that seized upon Saul in Naioth an angel, or done by the instrumentality of an angel.

Ans.

Ans. The instances which you put off upon the account of particular and extraordinary, I shall henceforth put off with silence, for I would not too much tautologize, Gram-
me recocta mors est. Those holannas of the children, because above nature, or acquired parts, or parent's education, must needs be extraordinary as to us; and if so, either they must be done by God, or his Spirit immediately, and that you have heard is not God's usual way; or mediately, by some instrument or other; and what good instruments can you think of to coin good impressions on our fancy and imagination but the angels of God? As for the spirit that seized upon Saul in Naioth, either it was the evil spirit, *The evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house,* 1 Sam. xviii. 19. or it was the good spirit by which he was wrapt, as one bereft of his senses for that time; and if so, I know not but an angel might be instrumental in it, yet all is put upon the score of the spirit, because the inspiration was from him. Oh why should we make these clash? though the angels minister in these particulars, yet we leave unto God the all in all: As, 1. The commission. 2. The inspiration. 3. The benediction; the angels are cisterns, but not fountains; we ascribe nothing to them to derogate from God, or Christ, or from the Spirit of Christ.

Object. In Sect. III. the children preserved, still the same doubt recurrss, whether mediately or immediately. — The instance of the weakly child, and the child nursed at Bolton, is ascribed in the very relation to God and his goodness; no mention of angels in them. — The same may be said of the other instances for teaching children. — And indeed the same may be said (to save a labour) of most of those instances in the following chapter, Sect. VI, VII, VIII.

Ans. For God's work of this nature, whether mediate or immediate, I have answered before, and shall speak to it more fully anon. But from the instances, wherein the relation ascribes all to God, and no mention of angels, I perceive no experience is pertinent with you, unless an angel be expressly and particularly mentioned. Our worthies are of another judgment. Zanchius speaking of the
 church's

church's deliverance, and of their enemies ruin by angels, brings in 1 Kings xix. 2 Kings i. Gen. xix. 2 Kings xix. and concludes, *Innumera hujus exempla non solum in scripturis leguntur, verum etiam hac ætate quotidie inveniuntur.*—Sunt enim angeli ministri Dei in omnibus ipsis judiciis patefaciendis et executioni mandandis, quæquam a nobis illi non videntur, sed tantummodo homines quorum opera illi utuntur. And our divine Seneca, bishop Hall, tells us no less; The trade we have with good spirits is not now driven by the eye, but is like to themselves spiritual; yet not so, but that even in bodily occasions we have many times insensible helps from them in such manner, as that by the effects we can boldly say here hath been an angel, tho' we saw him not: And he gives instances in one John Trelille a poor cripple, who upon three monitions in his dream, to wash in the well of Maderne in Cornwall, was suddenly restored to his limbs. The like instance he gives of John Spangenberg pastor of Northense, who no sooner was stept out of his house with his family to go to the Bains, than the house fell right down in the place; and he concludes, our own experience at home is able to furnish us with divers such instances; how many have we known that have fallen from very high towers, and into deep pits, past the natural possibility of hope, who yet have been preserved not from death only, but from hurt? whence could these things be but by the secret aid of those invisible helpers? It were easy to fill volumes with particulars of these kinds. What needs more? you see his instances have in them no mention of angels, and tho' you may object with him, as you do against me, yet in every such instance, enough to fill volumes, he can boldly say, Here hath been an angel, tho' we saw him not.

But suppose in some of my instances I may miss it, and that no angel either appears in them, or was in them, yet that saying of his exceedingly sticks with me, and may in good measure excuse me. Since I am convinced that their unseen hands are in many occurrences of my life, I have learn'd so much wit and grace, as rather to yield them too much, than too little stroke in ordering all my concerns.

ments. You may suppose I yield them too much, and I may suppose others yield them too little; but if the question be, Whether is more faulty? let this moderate man (as he is called) be our moderator, and you see he will easily and quickly determine the question betwixt us.

Object. In Chap. III. Sect. II, III. That good angels are God's instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body; and that the Holy Ghost useth the angels in the work of moving and quickning the heart; Mr. Baxter and Dr. Rutherford may believe it, and another not believe it, but that he doth all immediately; and how can he be disproved.

Ans. On this hinge hangs the weight of the whole controversy; for if God or the Spirit do all immediately, then away with angel-ministration, no need of them in any such respect. It seems Baxter's or Rutherford's authority, (and I may add the authority of all the afore cited) are of no stress without further proof, and therefore I shall lay down a few arguments.

For their ministration in general to the elect.

1. If God hath his angels, messengers, ministring spirits; then doth not God all immediately to his saints: But God hath his angels, messengers, ministring spirits. *Ergo.*

The sequel of the major is proved, because therefore they are called angels, messengers, ministring spirits, from their very office of being sent from God to his elect: *Quæris nomen hujus naturæ? spiritus est; quæris officium? angelus est.* What are angels but good spirits sent forth by God to minister for the good of the elect? Heb. i. 14. Psal. civ. 4. The minor is granted by all but Sadducees, or heretics, whom the scriptures condemn.

2. If God usually sends forth his angels to minister to his saints, then doth not God all immediately, and make no such use of them; but God usually sends forth his angels to minister to his saints. *Ergo.*

The sequel of the major is clear; and the minor is proved by all those texts, Psal. xci. 11, 12. Psal. xxxiv. 7. Heb. i. 14. with the rest cited throughout the treatise.

If the angels actually have ministred, and do minister to the saints at God's own appointment, then doth not God all immediately without his angels as instruments: But the angels actually have ministred, and do minister to the saints at God's own appointment. *Ergo.*

The major is clear: The minor, for what hath been, is confirmed by all the scripture texts already alledged; and for what is, you grant the story of Grinzus, (and such like) comes home, and is apposite, and you think none will deny, but that an angel may appear now as heretofore, and when he doth so appear, it is to be acknowledged to minister.

For their ministration in special to our souls.

1. What the angels can do to our soul's spiritual good, they do, and they will do; but they communicate themselves to our spirits, and our inward man for our good.

Ergo.

The proposition is clear, for else they should not obey God, or love us with all their might; which is contrary to the word; for their obedience to God, *they do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word*, Psal. ciii. 20. And for their love unto us, they rejoiced when the world was creating as a dwelling place for us, Job xxxviii. 7. And when Christ came to restore us, Luke ii. 13. And at the conversion of us, Luke xv. 7. And hence we may argue, what they can do for us, certainly they will do. The minor is cleared above, that they can know our minds and necessities in a great measure: They can by the mediation of our fancies and inward senses speak to us; they can propound truth to our minds, and persuade us to assent; and as counsellors they can persuade our wills to this and that good; and all this in ordinary.

2. If the angels are co-workers with God in enlightning the mind, then doth not God all immediately without them as instruments for our soul's health: But the angels are co-workers with God in enlightning the mind. *Ergo.*

The major is evident. The assumption cleared thus by Zanchy, *Ad intellectum quod attinet, duo in ejus illuminatione, qua veritatem rerum presertim divinarum percipiat, spectanda sunt; unum est mentis ipsius illustratio*

tio ad veritatem percipiendam; alterum veritatis ipsius oblatio ac patefactio, utrumque sit per lumen non angelicum, sed divinum, ac Spiritus sancti, ut passim scripturæ doceant. Ab angelis vero tanquam ab instrumentis et cooperatoribus Spiritus Sancti internis esse haud impie dici potest; qui excitatis verbi auditi phantasmatibus in hominibus, tum veritatem mente proponant, tum mentem ut in veritatem propositam intueatur, ei que assentiatur, commonefaciant, illustrent, atque confortent. Simili explico, ut oculus coloratum quidam videat, duo ad hoc requiruntur; unum, ut res colorata oculo proponatur videnda; alterum ut oculus ad videndum illustretur; utrumque sit per lumen solis; lumine enim et oculus simul illuminatur. ad videndum disponitur, atque afficitur; et res colorata oculo objicitur, videndaque proponitur; quod itaque oculus videat, totum hoc, quod externas attinet causas, debetur proprie actioni solis, qui suo lumine utrumque præstitit, cæterum, fac ut cujus oculus lumine solis illustrandus est, is dormiat et oculos habet oculos; aliquis vero accedat, et eum a somno ad lucem percipiendam; coloresque visendos excitet; is certe dicetur cooperator solis ad illius viri oculum illustrandum, coloresque patefaciendos, fuisse; nam is etiam ad oculi illustrationem, eoque ad rei coloratæ manifestationem nonnihil egit, non dissimili modo se habere Deum et angelum in actione, qua mens nostra ad veritatem percipiendam illuminatur, probabiliter dici potest. Propria, et vere efficiens causa Deus ipse est, suo Spiritu, suoque divino lumini Cooperator fuerit angelus: Hujus enim opera, uti dignatur Deus, certe potens ad veritatem menti intus proponendam; et ad mentem ut suos oculos oblatae veritati, et proposito lumini aperiat, excitandam. — Ut Deus externo utitur ministerio hominum ad mentes electorum illuminandas, et ad veritatem illis patefaciendam, ac persuadendam; sic etiam interne et invisibiliter utitur eandem ad rem ministerio angelorum, ita ut ipsi suam habeant actionem in mentes electorum, cum a Deo illuminantur.

3. If the angels are in their way co-workers with God in moving the will, then doth not God all immediately.

But

But they are in their way co-workers with God in moving the will. *Ergo.*

The major, or sequel is clear, The minor is proved *sic modo*, for God and the angels move the will diversly: *Sic* Deus proprie agit in voluntates nostras, easque movet et flectit quo vult; angeli vero ut cooperatores, et qui hortentur potius externis rationibus, quam qui flectens internis actionibus; now that thus they move the will, it proved from the evil angels, who are instigating us to evil; and by their instigations sometimes prevailing with our wills to embrace evil; therefore the good angels do the like to provoke us to good, for their power is greater and their love is higher than the others malice. And was not this mentioned by Dr. Rutherford? Shall the devil work in the children of disobedience? Eph. ii. 2. Enormously disquiet the affections, 1 Sam. xvi. 15. Yea, inject wicked thoughts into godly men with success, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. And shall the good angels be excluded from all actings and operations upon the inward senses of man? Tell me, if any man can tell me, with what shadow of truth can the angels of God be thus excluded? You see his positions were not without reason. And in your friend's paper is given this for granted, That the angels may be employed by God in some strange deliverances, in recovering of health, in suggesting good motions, &c. It is high time therefore to these disputes to put an end.

Only one thing more, which may stop the mouths of all gainfayers. I cited Mr. Baxter, saying, God's works on the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate; and good angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body. Now if this be a truth, viz. If it be God's ordinary way of providence to give us our mercies by the ministry of angels, then I hope every instance in my treatise may pass for truth, and every objection made by you against the same will easily vanish, and at once. And that this position might be clearly held out, I thought it a point of prudence to write in a few lines to Mr. Baxter for his proofs. His answer to my letter I shall here annex as the close of all, and then I have done.

Reverend

Reverend Brother,

I Received yours, and with it your appendix, and some sheets of your book; and am glad you have illustrated, and taught men to improve the doctrine of *the Ministration of Angels*. And I am sorry that necessity forceth me to fail your expectation, and tell you that unavoidable avocations prohibit me to give you those proofs of my assertion which you desire. In this haste I may only take notice of the state of the controversy, and give you but a touch upon those reasons that occur at present for my opinion, and a word of the consequence and use.

1. I suppose I may say that our brethren are agreed with us in all these following propositions. 1. The objective extent of ministry of angels is to the benefit of souls and bodies; this you have proved, and they deny not. 2. The scripture more frequently mentioneth their ministration for the bodies, than immediately for, or on the souls of men. 3. How they have access unto the soul, or nobler faculties; whether spirits intuitively behold spirits, and immediately operate on them, and converse with them, as animated bodies behold and operate on each other; and what measure of power angels have on souls, are questions that we are all unwilling to determine, and take it to be our duty in modesty to profess our ignorance of, as of things unrevealed; howsoever in some things we may humbly venture upon some conjectures. And we all disclaim and nauseate the presumption of the schoolmen, that fill their writings with so many confident assertions and copious disputations, about uncertain or unprofitable points, concerning the nature and ministry of angels. Much more do we all detest the presumption, pride, and vanity of the antient heretics, and the enthusiasts, and phanatics of latter times, that pretend to a special acquaintance with the orders, and operations of angels, beyond what is revealed, and glory in this as the excellency of their religion, or several sects. 4. The ministry of angels is eminently and chiefly for the elect and church, *for all things are theirs*. 5. Yet doth their ministry extend to others; when mercies are to be conveyed to them, or God to have special honour by them: God hath not limited this ministration

to the elect, as he hath not limited mercy in the general to them: Such common mercy as he vouchsafeth others, he may sometimes give them by ministry of angels, especially when it tendeth to the benefit of the church. 6. There is an extraordinary ministration of angels in cases of extraordinary revelations, visions, dreams, deliverances, preservations, and other wonders, which all Christians do acknowledge. 7. As to his proximity to the objects and effects, God doth all his works immediately, *Immediatione et virtutis et suppositi*, he is *intimior intimo nostro*, nearer us than we are to ourselves: No creature interposeth between his essence and us, so as to cause or prove a distance; and if God make use of millions of instruments and means, he is yet nevertheless the only prime cause; and doth as much to himself, as if he had used no instrument at all; there is no more of God in an effect produced without means, than in an effect produced by means; nor is there less of God because he maketh use of instruments; but it is certain that (tho' God in the sense aforesaid doth all immediately) yet as *immediate* signifieth without any second cause, so he doth not all immediately. 8. It is therefore no diminution to the honour of God, that he useth the ministry of angels in the collation of any of his favours to mankind: Had it been a dishonour to God to produce any thing out of himself, or to act by any thing, he had never made the world, which he made to his glory, and not to his dishonour; he hath never the less, because he giveth; nor doth ever the less himself because he useth his creatures in the work; it is his glory to be a communicative good. 9. We must be careful that we give not to angels or any creature any part of the service or honour proper to the Creator; tho' we acknowledge all that to be in them and by them, which is so indeed. 10. We must not direct our prayers unto angels, as being uncertain when and how far they are present, and having no order for it from our common Lord; and it being a thing that might easily draw us to idolatry, which angels are greater enemies to than we, abhorring more to rob their Maker. 11. It is a dangerous arrogancy to affect a visible communion with angels here on earth; or to desire it as the highest attainment of

religion, to have extraordinary converse with them; seeing our communion with God himself that is our happiness; and that converse with angels is best for us, which most promoteth our fruition of God, and God knoweth better than we what that is; and therefore as he hath appointed his angels an ordinary ministration for us, in order to our salvation and preservation thereunto; so it is a dangerous tempting of God for us to seek to put them out of their way, or to pray, or to look for such unusual appearances or works, as we have no promise for, nor full acquaintance with, nor skill to understand or use aright. We know not easily good spirits from bad, and we might so easily be seduced by creatures so terrible and so strange to us, that it is a very great mercy that God hath committed us rather to the teaching of man, and guideth us to our end by means more suitable to our natures, and useth the appearances of angels but rarely and on some extraordinary occasion; so that what Christ said of rising from the dead, we may say of angels, 'He would not be persuaded by them, that will not hear Moses and the prophets.'

12. As it is a very hard thing to receive mercy by the hand of any creature, and not to adhere too much to that creature, and suffer our hearts to be stopt, or diverted, or alienated from God, and the more useful and excellent the instrument is, the stronger is our temptation, and the greater is our danger; so the more we are convinced of the ministry and usefulness of the angels to our welfare, the more we are in danger of too much ascribing to them, or adhering to them, and minding of them more than God. And therefore we must carefully watch against this temptation, and take heed lest our hearts take up in these our fellow servants, by whom they should be raised and drawn to God. And yet as we must not cast away our mercies for fear of over-valuing them, nor reject magistrates or ministers, or parents, for fear of idolizing them; so neither must we by such fears be drawn from our acknowledgement of the service of angels, nor deny the mercy of their ministration, to avoid the abuse of it. In all this I suppose, we are all agreed, and the point that remaineth unresolved, is but this, Whether it be God's ordinary way to give us our

our mercies by the ministry of angels? not whether rarely he doth so, nor whether rarely he doth otherwise; but what is the way of his ordinary providence. And here I still profess my judgment to be for the affirmative; and that among others, for these reasons following.

1. If scriptures make known to us, that it is the very stated office of the angels, to be ministring spirits for the heirs of salvation, and that about their daily ordinary concernments; that it is God's ordinary way of providence, to give us even our ordinary mercies by their means. But the antecedent is true, *Ergo* so is the consequent. Were it but some unusual thing with the angels to be sent out of their way upon such terrestrial errands: Or were it usual with them to do only things unusual or wonderful for us, then I confess we could not infer our conclusion from their service; but when it is their very stated offices not only to do wonders for us, but to serve us in our ordinary concernments, the consequence is plain. And therefore I find nothing incumbent on me now, but to prove the antecedent, which is done by those plain expressions of the scriptures.

1. Such as declare them to be stated servants of Christ, as Mediator and head of the church, for the promoting of his work of salvation for his body; as these together, Mat. xxviii. 18. *All power is given to me in heaven and earth,* John xiii. 3. Ephes. i. 20, 21, 22. *And sit him at his right hand in the celestials, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.* 2. Such as particularly describe their office and work, as Heb. i. 14. *Are they not all ministring spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?* Consider here, 1. That this is the very office. 2. It is about our ordinary concernments. 3. It is expressed generally, without limiting to any one thing or way; and 4. It is all the angels, that are put into this office: That these angels are great in strength, Psal. ciii. 20: *one of them able to do more than a thousand men,* and that they are innumerable, Psal. lxxviii. 17. Heb. xii. 22. *incomparably more than all*

men in the world; and then I think it will pass doubt that it is their ordinary work to minister to us in our ordinary concerns. So Mat. xviii. 10. *I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.* This can signify no less, than that every Christian, even the weakest, hath one or more angels deputed by God to take a special care of him (though the same angels may also take care of others) and the appropriation can never properly be meant of some rare unusual act performed for them, yea, for some very few of them, but must needs mean a stated service. So Psal. xxxiv. 6, 7. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth him* Here is described a stated charge or office about all them that fear the Lord, for deliverance out of all their troubles, which amounts to the administration of their ordinary succours. So Psal. xci. 11, 12. 'For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways: They shall bear thee up in their hand, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.' What can be spoken plainer to signify a stated office for constant ministration, even to our ordinary preservation in every step we tread! and therefore they are called his angels, and his ministers, Psal. civ. 4. So Psal. ciii. 20, 21. 'Ye his angels which excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkning to the voice of his word. And ye his hosts, ye ministers of his that do his pleasure. So Rev. xii. 7. *Michael and his angels are made the army that fight against the devil and his angels.* And if they were not attendant and employed ordinarily in the business of our salvation, how could the conversion of every sinner be the matter of their joy in heaven? Luke. xv. 10. This is inferred by their constant presence in the church assemblies, obliging us to revered decency, 1 Cor. xi. 10. And therefore they are described as employed with us, as looking into the same mystery, 1 Pet. i. 12. and as knowing *God's manifold wisdom by the church*, Ephes. iii. 10. And therefore Paul's dreadful charge (Oh that all bishops and ministers of the gospel would read it walking!) in 1 Tim. v. 21. to Timothy, not to prejudice, or prefer

one before another, nor do any thing by partiality, or according to his own inclination as before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels; intimating their presence, and interest in our church-affairs. The angel of the Lord that defendeth the church, doth persecute and chase the wicked enemies. Plal xxxv 5, 6. they convey departed souls to blessedness, which is an ordinary work, Luke xvi 22. they are reapers that at the last shall bundle up the tares for burning, and shall sever the wicked from among the just, Mat. xiii. 39. 40. 'and shall gather the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other,' Mat. xxiv. 31. And they are part of the society, to which we are brought by Christ, Heb. xii. 22, and to whom we shall be made equal, Luke xx. 30. I shall not mention the extraordinary ministrations, as their promulgating of the laws, Acts vii. 53. Heb. xxi. 9. Their shewing John his revelations, Rev. i. 2. And teaching Daniel to understand Dan. viii. 16, 17. and ix. 21, 22, 23. Their ministring to Christ, Mat. iv. 11. And strengthening him Luke xxii. 43. with abundance more such instances; it being my business only to prove their ministration in our ordinary concerns, which the fore-cited texts do evidently prove. And how many points are currently received among us, that have not a quarter so much scripture evidence as this? Did not greater business call me off, I should stay to improve some other argument.

As,

2. From the contrary employment of the malignant spirits.

3 From the suitableness of our supposition to all God's workings, who hath chosen to glorify his wisdom by doing things by suitable instruments, and concatenated means; and to glorify his goodness by taking his creatures into the work and honour of doing good, in subordination to him; he could have enlightened and enlivened us without the sun, but he would not. He calleth his ministers co-workers with Christ, no marvel then if his angels have such honour.

These, and other arguments I must pretermitt, and in the conclusion first lay down some excellent consequents of

this doctrine; and secondly defend it against the accusations of the contrary.

1. The doctrine of angels ministration acquainteth us with much of the frame of those admirable means by which the providence of God doth work in the governing of the world, and the glorifying of his name. If this be unknown, we shall be strange to the wonderful appearances of God's wisdom, and goodness, and power which will be much obscured by hiding so excellent a part of the effects. As in a watch, or any excellent engine, to know the parts in themselves is nothing, unless we know them in their respects to other parts, and their place, and use, and office in the frame; So is it in this glorious part of the frame of creation and providence; to say the angels are excellent creatures, and made to glorify their creator, is but to express their nature and their common end, and not their special office and work, as they respect the whole society; and the single strings will make no melody, but as they are tuned and touch'd in harmony.

2. This doctrine of angels ministration acquainteth us with much of the unity of the whole family in heaven and earth: When all the parts are so harmoniously connexed in their respects and use. And it declareth the excellency of holy love, and humility and obedience, which these noble spirits exercise in their condescension to the meanest Christian at the command of God; and reproveth us that are so scant in love, humility, and obedience, as to be backward to the service and benefit of each other.

3. It serves to take off the inordinate desire of visible and extraordinary converse with angels; when it is understood that they are appointed to be ordinarily, and invisibly serviceable to us, in a more safe and suitable way.

4. It very much helps our faith in the point of the immortality of the soul, and the like to come; when we understand, that there is a world of such nobler spirits employed about us, and therefore that we are not creatures so contemptible, as to be incapable of another life: And that we shall be made like angels, and have their communion in glory, when we have such communion with them in the state of grace.

5. It shews the glory of our Redeemer, who as head of the church doth use the ordinary service of such noble spirits for the welfare of his body.

6. It is some relief to our weak and distant lapsed natures, that as we have a Mediator between us and the Father, so there are (though not mediators, yet) a glorified world of blessed spirits, possessors already of the happiness we seek, and helpers to our salvation; so that in our meditations of the world to come, we may have some more low familiär thoughts that are necessary to our weakness, and are not amazed and deterred by looking only at the infinitely distant majesty of God; and who knoweth not how great an encouragement familiarity is? and how much familiarity is assisted by proximity.

Object. 1. But it will draw down the mind from God.

Ans. Christ's human nature also, and ministers and all creatures may be so abused; but of themselves they are helps to lead us to God.

Object. 2. This doctrine will introduce the worshipping of angels, and praying to them

Ans. We must not forbear declaring the excellency of angels; nor their confessed extraordinary ministry for fear of such abuse; therefore neither their ordinary ministrations: nor must we deny the ordinary use of the sun, lest men idolize it, nor of ministers of the gospel that further our salvation, lest men should worship them with that which is not their due. The Holy Ghost hath expressly warned us, 'that no man beguile us of our reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the head,' &c. Col. ii. 18. 19. and so hath cautioned us against this abuse. And we must not deny a great truth in Christianity, for fear of giving occasion to popish misuse of it.

Object. 3. It will fill the world again with a multitude of curious, vain enquiries about angels, which the schools abound in.

Ans. We must not shut our eyes against plain truths, lest wanton wits should trouble the world with starting other questions about unrevealed things: Vain questions

are no where so perilous as concerning God himself. And yet no knowledge is so necessary as the knowledge of him.

Pardon, dear brother, that in haste I can give you but this short undigested script, instead of what you desire of me. I rest,

London. Nov.
29, 1661.

Your unworthy
Fellow Servant,
RICHARD BAXTER.

Reverend Sir,

I Have perused your considerations of the ministry of angels, those *pneumata leitourgika*, as the apostle calls them. I remember Theophilast speaking of this point calls it, *Polle peri emas tou theou hedemoria*, The exceeding goodness and care of God; and chargeth us, *Me ameleint tes toiautes diakonias*, Not to be forgetful of such a glorious service, which we have for our good from these blessed angels. In the acknowledgement of this truth (their blessed ministration for the good of God's elect) I find the concurrence of all; in the exemplification of it fully and particularly few or none; in the depravation and prostituting of it to idolatrous purposes more than many. Blessed be God, who hath given, as to this point, his spirit; and that light, and understanding, and an excellent wisdom is found in you, as was said of Daniel; in as much that in this tract we find these blessed spirits, their service, without diminution of their glory; their rule and power, with subordination to the Father of spirits; their ministry to man, without reluctance and disdain; their respect and use from saints without superstitious adoration; and indeed the whole consideration of them, so far as falls within the knowledge of men, pithily, plainly, powerfully, pathetically, practically, set before us. When the apostle Paul was wrapp'd up into the third heaven, he heard and saw glorious things, but they were *arreta remata a aukaxon anthropon lalēsai*, they were unspeakable; but he that giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding, hath not only revealed these deep and secret things, but given you utterance and power to express them. Sir, it was ever esteemed a sacred thing
amongst

amongst the Jews, as is noted by Paulus Fagius, to preserve the memory of any of their Rabbies, who had done some remarkable service for their law, with this resolution, Let their name be blessed: If the church in which we live, do not the like for this, and the rest of your divine discourses, yet you have a God in whom you trust, that will one day acknowledge it, and these very angels themselves shall testify your ample service done to them as instruments under the great Jehovah, and Lord of hosts. Let me only wish you, that you smother not this light, nor veil such an advantage in confining it to the darkness of private use; for if any person do disgust, yet understanding persons will say of this, and your other labours, as Alphonsus king of Arragon said of some learned persons, *Hi mihi dapes, hi conviva*. The Lord sanctify this, and all other helps to our edification and building up in Christ, till we come to the heavenly Jerusalem, and the innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly, and the church of the first-born.

Dreston, Octob.
8, 1661.

Yours,
W. COLLE.

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